

# **The Participation of Women from Rural Areas in Development Projects for Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case of Community Groups in Maqongqo Area, KwaZulu-Natal Province**

by

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University*



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## **DECLARATION**

By submitting this thesis, I declare that it is my original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights, and that I have not previously submitted this work, in its entirety or in part, to any other institution for purposes of obtaining a qualification.

Date: March 2017

## ABSTRACT

Since a democratic dispensation was established in South Africa in 1994, the country has been working to level the social, economic, and political playing field for all of its people, particularly those from socio-economically deprived backgrounds and contexts. The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of women from rural areas participating in selected community development projects. A further aspect of the study was to explore the reasons for non-participation of individuals and/or categories of communities in community development projects, and to understand the role of development stakeholders with respect to community development projects for sustainable livelihoods.

The study sought to analyse the interactional dynamics of aspects of the experiences of women from rural areas with respect to community development projects. The research was conducted within a qualitative research tradition, and took the form of a small-scale case study. The data-collection research techniques included focus group discussions with participants of selected community development projects; in-depth semi-structured interviews with development stakeholders; a self-administered questionnaire submitted to those who were not participating in any community development project at the time; and the analysis of key documents that the groups were willing to share with the researcher.

Findings of the study revealed that the participation of women in community development projects led to the empowerment and advancement of women in sustainable ways. This was evident from the improvements that the women reported in their lives. Secondly, findings of the study revealed that the reasons for non-participation in community development projects were varied, individual and sometimes structural. Lastly, the study revealed that the role of development stakeholders was quite strong, although people participating in community development projects felt that support from development stakeholders was inadequate. The findings point to the fact that those who participated in community development projects have to consider the interactional dynamics of ideological, political, and

economic aspects of participation and development in community development projects.

The study troubles conventional conceptions of community development, which are mostly oblivious to the dynamics and intricacies involved in its practice. The recommendation made by the study is for government policy makers and planners to embrace the reality that the project of community development is incomplete at the level of legislative framing and that this legislative framing is only the beginning, as the essence of the project of community development is actually access, participation and growth. The research community needs to point the way by identifying and elevating lessons that are already in existence in many communities where significant progress has been made in order to ensure that community development is not about itself, but rather about people.

**Keywords:** community development; community participation; development stakeholders; sustainable livelihoods; sustainable development; empowerment.

## OPSOMMING

Sedert 'n demokratiese bestel in Suid-Afrika in 1994 tot stand gekom het, is die land besig om die sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke speelveld vir al die mense van Suid-Afrika gelyk te maak, veral vir diegene uit sosio-ekonomies ontnemde agtergronde en kontekste. Die doel van die studie was om die ervarings van vroue uit landelike gebiede wat aan geïdentifiseerde gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte deelneem, te verken. 'n Verdere aspek van die studie was om die redes vir nie-deelname van individue en/of kategorieë van gemeenskappe in gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte te verken, en om die rol van belangegroep wat by ontwikkeling betrokke is met betrekking tot gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte vir volhoubare bestaan te verstaan. Die studie het gepoog om die wisselwerkende dinamika van aspekte van die ervarings van vroue uit landelike gebiede met betrekking tot gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte te analiseer.

Die navorsing is binne 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingstradisie uitgevoer, en het die vorm van 'n kleinskaalse gevallestudie geneem. Die navorsingstegnieke vir data-insameling het fokusgroepbesprekings met lede van geselekteerde gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte; grondige semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met belanghebbendes in ontwikkeling; 'n self-geadministreerde vraelys aan diegene wat nie ten tyde van die studie aan enige gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojek deelgeneem het nie; en die ontleding van die belangrikste dokumente wat die groepe bereid was om met die navorser te deel, ingesluit.

Bevindinge van die studie het getoon dat die ervarings van vroue wat aan gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte deelneem op volhoubare maniere tot die bemagtiging en bevordering van vroue gelei het. Dit was duidelik uit die verbetering in hul lewens wat deur vroue berig is. Tweedens het bevindinge van die studie getoon dat die redes vir nie-deelname aan gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte van uiteenlopende, individuele en soms strukturele aard was. Laastens het bevindinge van die studie getoon dat die rol van belangegroep m.b.t. ontwikkeling nogal sterk was, alhoewel mense wat aan gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte deelneem, gevoel het dat die ondersteuning van hierdie belanghebbendes onvoldoende was.

Die bevindings dui op die feit dat diegene wat betrokke is by gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte die wisselwerkende dinamika van ideologiese, politieke en ekonomiese aspekte van deelname en ontwikkeling in gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojekte in ag moet neem.

Die studie bots met konvensionele opvattinge van gemeenskapsontwikkeling, wat meestal onbewustheid weerspieël van die dinamika en kompleksiteit wat in die praktyk daarby betrokke is. Die aanbeveling van die studie is dat die regering se beleidmakers en beplanners die werklikheid moet aanvaar dat die projek van gemeenskapsontwikkeling op die vlak van die wetgewende raamwerk onvolledig is, en dat hierdie wetgewende raamwerk net die begin is, daar die kern van die gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprojek eintlik toegang, deelname en groei vereis. Die navorsingsgemeenskap moet die weg aantoon deur die reeds bestaande lesse in baie gemeenskappe waar beduidend vordering gemaak is, te identifiseer en te verhef ten einde te verseker dat gemeenskapsontwikkeling is nie op homself nie, maar eerder op mense gerig is.

Sleutelwoorde:

gemeenskapsontwikkeling; gemeenskapsdeelname; belanghebbendes byontwikkeling; volhoubare lewensbestaan; volhoubare ontwikkeling; bemagtiging.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>OPSOMMING .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>List of Addendums .....</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>Chapter 1: General Overview .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Background Information .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 Research problem .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.3.1 Statement of the research problem .....	4
1.3.2 Research questions.....	6
1.3.3 Hypothesis testing .....	7
<b>1.4 Aims and objectives of the study.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.5 Research methodology and design .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.6 Outline of the study .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.7 Summary .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Sustainable development and rural livelihoods .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.2 The notion of sustainable development.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3 The notion of community development.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.4 Approaches to community development.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.4.1 The people-centred approach to development .....	14
2.4.2 The feminist approach to development .....	16
<b>2.5 The concept of sustainable livelihoods .....</b>	<b>17</b>

<b>2.6</b>	<b>Integrated sustainable rural development strategy .....</b>	<b>22</b>
2.6.1	Women in rural development .....	24
2.6.2	Barriers to sustainable rural development.....	26
<b>2.7</b>	<b>Strategies for sustainable livelihoods .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.8</b>	<b>The role of development stakeholders in sustainable development .....</b>	<b>31</b>
2.8.1	Poverty reduction .....	32
2.8.2	Provision of financial resources.....	33
2.8.3	Promoting capacity building .....	34
<b>2.9</b>	<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	<b>Community participation and rural development.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Community participation defined .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Principles of community participation .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Levels of community participation.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Community participation: the building blocks of development .....</b>	<b>46</b>
3.5.1	Community participation as an aspect of human development .....	47
3.5.2	Social learning.....	47
3.5.3	Capacity building .....	48
3.5.4	Empowerment .....	49
3.5.5	Sustainability.....	50
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Community participation interpreted .....</b>	<b>50</b>
3.6.1	Participation as a <i>means</i> .....	50
3.6.2	Participation as an <i>end</i> .....	51
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Research methodology and design.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Research methodology.....</b>	<b>55</b>
4.2.1	Research orientation of the study .....	56
4.2.2	Sampling procedure.....	56
4.2.3	Population characteristics .....	57
4.2.4	Access to participants.....	57
4.2.5	Piloting research instruments.....	58
4.2.6	Research methods .....	58

<b>4.3</b>	<b>Data analysis.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Research limitations and challenges .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Ethical considerations .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	<b>Data presentation and analysis .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Profiling of the participants .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Educational levels of participants .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Employment trends in the research area .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<b>Focus group discussions with key informants .....</b>	<b>72</b>
5.5.1	Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project .....	72
5.5.2	Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project .....	79
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>5.7</b>	<b>Responses to the questionnaire .....</b>	<b>87</b>
5.7.1	Reasons for non-participation in community projects .....	87
5.7.2	Community participation and development .....	88
<b>5.8</b>	<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>5.9</b>	<b>Interviews with development stakeholders .....</b>	<b>91</b>
5.9.1	The role of development stakeholders in promoting community development.. .....	92
5.9.2	Community development strategies .....	93
5.9.3	Impact of projects on communities.....	94
5.9.4	Project sponsorships.....	95
5.9.5	Community development forums .....	96
5.9.6	Participation in community development projects.....	96
<b>5.10</b>	<b>Summary .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Chapter 6:</b>	<b>Conclusions, findings and recommendations.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Consolidation and summary of the main findings .....</b>	<b>100</b>
6.2.1	Objectives of the research study .....	100
6.2.2	Research hypotheses and propositions.....	101
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Recommendations for enhanced community development .....</b>	<b>105</b>

6.3.1	Recommendations for policy makers .....	105
6.3.2	Recommendations for communities .....	106
6.3.3	Recommendations for development stakeholders .....	107
<b>6.4</b>	<b>Limitations of the research study .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>6.5</b>	<b>Possibilities for further research.....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>6.6</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>References .....</b>		<b>111</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>		<b>126</b>
Appendix 1: Permission Request: Umkhambathini Local Municipality .....		126
Appendix 2: Request for Consent from Participants .....		127
Appendix 3: Focus Group Interview Questions.....		128
Appendix 4: Interview Schedule for Developmental Stakeholders.....		130
Appendix 5: Questionnaire for Non-Participants in Community Development Projects.....		131

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1.1: Topographical Map of Maqongqo Village .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Figure 1.2: Study Model .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Figure 2.1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SL Framework).....</b>	<b>18</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 3.1: Participation as a <i>Means</i>, Participation as an <i>End</i> .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Table 5.1: Household by Race.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Table 5.2: Household by Language .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Table 5.3: Employment Status by Sex.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Table 5.4: Reasons for Non-Participation .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Table 5.5: Community Participation and Development.....</b>	<b>89</b>

## **LIST OF ADDENDUMS**

<b>Appendix 1: Permission Request: Umkhambathini Local Municipality .....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Request for Consent from Participants .....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Focus Group Interview Questions .....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Interview Schedule for Developmental Stakeholders .....</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Questionnaire for Non-Participants in Community Development Projects.....</b>	<b>131</b>

# Chapter 1: General Overview

## 1.1 Introduction

In South Africa, approximately 41 per cent of households are female-headed (Statistics South Africa, 2016). This implies that a significant proportion of women have assumed the responsibility of having to provide for households, despite the fact that more females than males are in the category of unemployed in South Africa (ibid). A situation such as this points to the need for, and importance of, effective development programmes in order to support women in their efforts to provide for families.

The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (Republic of South Africa, 2013) stipulates that all spheres of government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a responsibility to ensure the availability of opportunities for the empowerment and advancement of women. Such opportunities could include community-based initiatives targeting women, particularly those from socio-economically deprived contexts. These programmes could take a variety of forms and shapes; for example, providing resources in support of various community development projects targeting women in disadvantaged contexts.

Community development projects have the potential to serve as a vehicle for the promotion of social change, and for improving the quality of life of vulnerable people (Rondinelli, 1993:98). Projects that fulfil this function successfully may have a positive impact and empower the people who participate in them (Atkins & Milne, 1995:1). Such projects should empower people to work in partnership with various government and other developmental institutions to ensure that people are able to benefit from what these services and products offer (Theron & Davids, 2014:9). Participation in development projects is voluntary, but the important proviso is that it must lead to empowerment and self-sufficiency – that is, participants in development projects must be able to take control of the development processes in these projects, although they may still be receiving technical support through working with government, NGOs and other development agencies (Burkey, 1993:56).



In line with the need to provide for the advancement and empowerment of the vulnerable sections of communities, the KwaZulu-Natal government developed the 2030 KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Growth Development Plan (PGDP), which provides a strategic development map for the advancement and empowerment of communities for self-sustenance, promotion of creative ways of sustenance, and instilling an attitude that empowers communities to take responsibility for their own development (Provincial Planning Commission, 2013).

This study is an attempt to explore the experiences of women from the rural areas of Maqongqo, Pietermaritzburg, who were participating in selected community development projects, with a view to, amongst other things, gain a sense of what these development projects mean for ordinary rural women.

## 1.2 Background Information

Maqongqo Village is a rural area within the jurisdiction of Umkhambathini Local Municipality, which is just outside of the city of Pietermaritzburg in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The following is a topographical map of Maqongqo Village and the surrounding areas.

**Figure 1.1: Topographical Map of Maqongqo Village**



**Source:** Statistics South Africa (2011)

This area was hit by political violence, which continued from January 1990 until around 1994 (Kelly, 2012:290-350). The violence had a negative impact on the area as it contributed to the increase of poverty and underdevelopment, as houses and business facilities were burnt down. Residents and business people had to flee as they feared for their lives. More than a thousand women and children fled to the city to seek assistance from churches (Kelly, 2012: 294). Respondents in the area told the researcher that “Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) vigilantes came to the area to question residents about their political affiliations, and to warn that all those that were ANC would be killed as there will be no place for *amaqabane*<sup>1</sup> in the area”. Therefore, if people fled they were likely to be associated with a particular political party and be killed. This made attempting to flee risky, as many people were killed for wanting to leave in search of economic activities.

The few households that remained were in a state of hopeless destitution. After the violence, Maqongqo Village degenerated to absolute poverty, which Swanepoel and De Beer (2011:3) describe as the kind of poverty that happens when communities have low or no income, to such an extent that it was extremely difficult for a large section of the community to meet their most basic needs, such as food and shelter. The violence left many women widowed and children orphaned as their husbands and parents became the main targets of the killings.

When the violence subsided after the elections in 1994, the community members had to use what remained to reconstitute their lives. This saw some women in the area initiating community development projects in order to provide for their basic needs. The projects that people started were largely in the areas of vegetable gardening, poultry farming, arts and crafts, and sewing. However, most of the projects could not become sustainable due to a myriad of challenges, which included a lack of necessary resources, both human and material, to sustain the projects. When the projects were initiated there

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<sup>1</sup> The word *amaqabane* was used to refer to “comrades” exclusively within the African National Congress (ANC). This is how supporters and members of the ANC addressed each other; the word as a greeting distinguished supporters and members of the ANC from individuals affiliated with other political parties.

was hope that the project would progress, but when they failed this was a slide back from hope into hopelessness. However, a few projects were able to survive to this day. This study sets out to explore the experiences of women participating in the few surviving development projects that were still running at the time of this study. These are projects whose members are women and that are led and managed by women. The intention of the study is to analyse the interactional dynamics of the aspects of the experiences of these women with respect to their participation in community development projects. What has kept them in these projects? Are there benefits for participating in these projects? What is the cost of participating in a community development project? What sustains community development?

### **1.3 Research problem**

This section of the study discusses the problem statement – the statement of the problem that gave rise to this study; the key research questions – the questions that this study seeks to answer or respond to; and hypotheses – a tentative finding or explanation that could reasonably be expected to result from the investigation, which the actual findings might accept or reject.

#### **1.3.1 Statement of the research problem**

The advancement and ultimate achievement of human rights and freedoms, human dignity, equality and non-sexism is at the core of the socio-political significance of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). However, escalating levels of poverty and underdevelopment continue to present as a key development challenge that undermines the advancement and ultimate achievement of the aspirations of the Constitution (1996).

Confronting poverty and underdevelopment has been at the centre of the transformation efforts of post-apartheid South Africa. The significance of this development trajectory was first articulated through the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) of 1994, and later reiterated and elevated in the National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 2011). The guiding objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP) are located in efforts to ensure the elimination of poverty and underdevelopment, and

the reduction of inequality. Central to the spirit of the NDP is the fact that all its elements must find expression in these areas of significance. The NDP provides a development map or vision towards which all development efforts of the country should converge. The intention is to provide a focused and streamlined trajectory for development in South Africa in order to address development challenges, such as poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The reduction of poverty is an international concern and, in South Africa, poverty is one of the structural challenges with effects that intertwine with those of unemployment and inequality as its siblings. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa has made significant strides to reduce levels of poverty and deprivation by improving access to basic services, such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing, especially for previously excluded sections of society. For instance, between 2006 and 2011, South Africa registered significant progress in addressing the nexus of poverty and underdevelopment. The expanding social protection programme mainly drove this improvement in the form of social grants that targeted the poorest of the poor (Seekings, 2014). However, there is still a long way to go before poverty and underdevelopment can be adequately eradicated. This is evidenced by the increasing number of people who are struggling to make ends meet, with 21.7 per cent living under conditions of extreme poverty (i.e. unable to pay for basic nutritional requirements); 37 per cent not having sufficient money to purchase both adequate food items and non-food items and as a result having to sacrifice food to pay for non-food items such as transport and airtime; and 53.8 per cent unable to afford enough food and non-food items but falling under the category that has to survive on under R779 per month (Statistics South Africa, 2014).

While poverty has declined since the advent of democracy, research evidence suggests that females remain likely to be poorer than males (Statistics South Africa, 2016; Republic of South Africa, 2015). Due to the skewed conception and delivery of development during apartheid, poverty has had a differential impact on females depending on their race and geographical location. For instance, women from rural and other non-urban areas are often comparatively worse-off than their counterparts in urban settings. In order to mitigate the impact of these effects, South Africa has rolled out various development initiatives and programmes. However, although these

initiatives have encouraged women, in particular, to participate in various income-generating community projects, there have been numerous barriers to their full participation, making it difficult for them to participate actively in the country's economy (Republic of South Africa, 2015).

In the area where the current study was conducted, approximately 57 per cent of households are female-headed, while 54 per cent of women in the working age bracket (15-65 years) are unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2011:25). Therefore, in order to meet their basic family needs and sustain their households, some women have initiated community development projects. Some of the projects are state-funded while others receive funding from non-governmental organisations. The study focuses on two community development projects that have been in existence for a period of not less than twenty years each. The majority of the membership of these two projects is women. These projects have a history of being exclusively led and managed by women. This study sets out to explore the experiences and views of the participation of these women in their community development projects.

### **1.3.2 Research questions**

Based on the social research principles for setting research questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001:83-85; Ratele, 2006:540-547; and Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:30) the key research questions that this study sought to answer were:

- What are the experiences of women regarding their participation in selected community development projects?
- What are the reasons for non-participation by some individuals and/or sections of the community in community development projects?
- What is the role of development practitioners in ensuring that community development projects result in benefits for communities, particularly women and their households?
- How does the above mix play out to shape the way(s) in which women participate in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods?

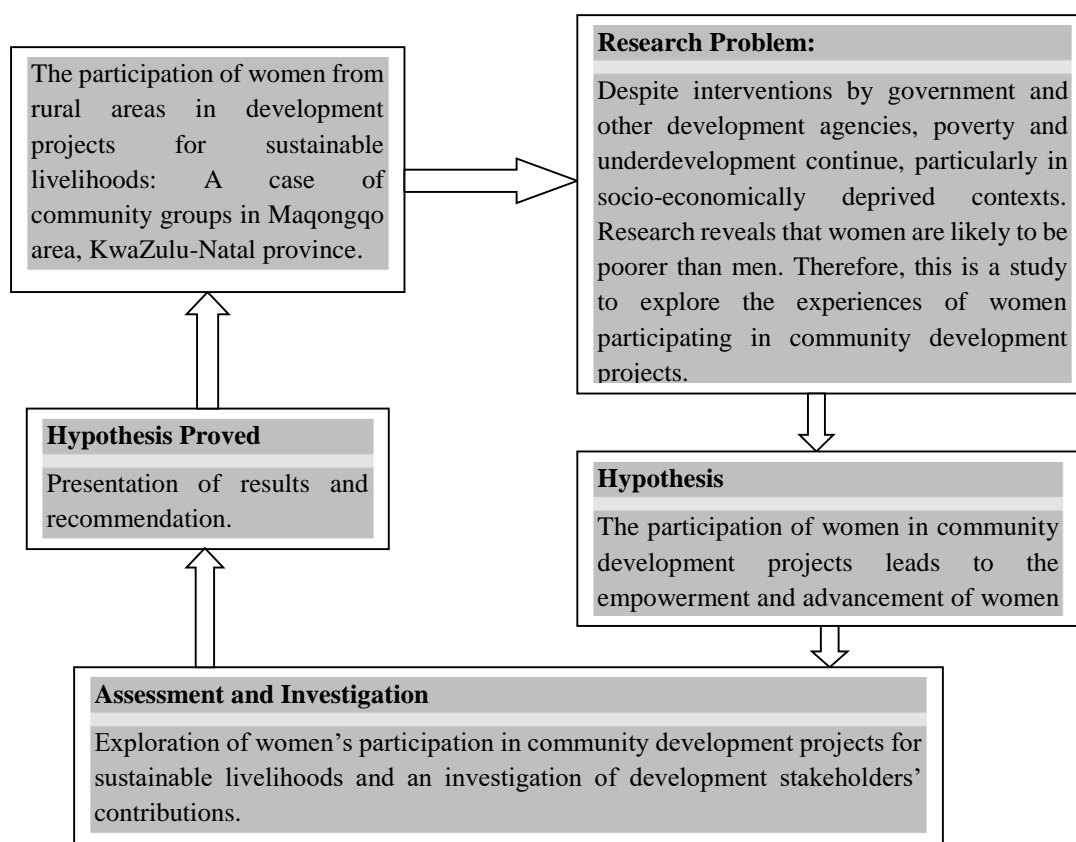
### 1.3.3 Hypothesis testing

For formulating a hypothesis as described by Babbie (2007:44), Pietersen and Maree (2007:203-206) and Durrheim (2006:209), the study sought to test the strength of the following hypotheses:

- The participation of women in community development projects leads to the empowerment and advancement of women in sustainable ways.
- The reasons for non-participation in community development projects are individual and structural.
- The role of development stakeholders is weak and varied, and depends upon the sector.

The study attempts to follow the model below, adapted from Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:13):

**Figure 1.2: Study Model**



## **1.4 Aims and objectives of the study**

The main aim of the study is to explore the experiences of women from rural areas participating in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods. The objectives of the study, as outlined in Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2007: 9) are to:

- Explore the experiences of women from rural areas participating in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods.
- Explore the potential barriers to rural women's participation in community development projects.
- Assess the extent to which the role of various development practitioners do or do not contribute to the experiences of women participating in community development projects, leading to sustainable livelihoods for women and their households.
- To assess how the experiences of women, the reasons for non-participation of some individuals and the role of the development practitioners play out to shape the way(s) in which women participate in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods.

## **1.5 Research methodology and design**

A case study research method (Rule and John, 2011: 3-12) was adopted for the study as the aim was to explore the experiences of women participating in particular community development projects, using as examples two community development projects in Maqongqo Village, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

A qualitative design was employed, as the intention of the study was to explore, describe and understand the experiences of women participating in community development projects (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 70). The research questions were explored using the following research methods and techniques: in-depth semi-structured interviews (Dicicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006: 314-321), focus group discussions (Babbie, 2007: 308-9; Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 90-2), a self-administered questionnaire (Babbie, 2007: 257-264) and document analysis (Plummer, 2001).



## 1.6 Outline of the study

The study is structured in six chapters. The content of each chapter is summarised below.

**Chapter One** provides the background to the study, and states the problem in which the study is rooted. In this chapter, the researcher made reference to the key research questions, objectives of the study, as well as a synopsis of the methodological and design considerations made with regards to the conduct of the study. The propositions investigated are also outlined here. The significance and rationale for the study is also discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter Two** provides a theoretical basis or framework by reviewing, discussing and analysing literature and concepts relating to sustainable development and rural livelihoods.

**Chapter Three** provides a theoretical foundation, lens, or framework by reviewing, discussing and analysing literature and concepts relating to community participation and rural development.

**Chapter Four** provides an exposition of the considerations that the researcher made in relation to research methodology, design, the research tools, limitations and ethical issues relating to the study.

**Chapter Five** provides a description and analysis of the key findings of the study. In order to do this, the chapter provides a sense of what the findings are and what they mean for the participation and empowerment of women in community development projects.

**Chapter Six** provides concluding remarks based on the findings of the study. The chapter does this by providing a synopsis of the key findings, and pulls these together in order to craft key conclusions regarding the participation of women in community development projects. The chapter concludes by highlighting limitations experienced before and during the research process, and outlines possible areas that could be pursued for further research with regards to the participation of women in community development projects.



## 1.7 Summary

The question of community development refers to access, participation and growth. In South Africa, significant progress has been made. However, poverty and underdevelopment continue to affect lives in the most adverse of ways. This chapter highlighted the gender divide of poverty and underdevelopment. This sits at the heart of this study, as it refers to the participation of women in community development projects, and the questions that need to be resolved in order to ensure access, participation and growth, particularly for these types of socio-economically deprived groups.

This chapter provided a background to the study, and presented the problem in which the study is rooted. In this chapter, the researcher made reference to the key research questions, objectives of the study, as well as methodological and design considerations with regards to the conduct of the study. The propositions investigated were also outlined, and the significance and rationale for the study was discussed. The next chapter provides a review of literature relating to sustainable development and rural livelihoods.

## **Chapter 2: Sustainable development and rural livelihoods**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to deconstruct sustainable development and rural livelihoods as key concepts and principles in contemporary development discourse. The discussion of community development will include approaches to community development, sustainable livelihoods, sustainable rural development, and the role of development stakeholders. The rationale for the discussion of the above is to present the context and template in which the key concerns and findings of the study should be appreciated and understood.

### **2.2 The notion of sustainable development**

Sustainable development is defined as the management and regulation of the natural ecosystem, societal as well as organisational governance, with a view to providing a reasonable guarantee for continuous survival for generations to come (Amanor & Moyo, 2008:12). The core constituents of sustainable development therefore include the necessity to place an important economic value on bionetwork; espousing an innovative environmental economy that controls natural renewable resources in the most efficient way possible; and, importantly, instituting a management system that identifies and deals with key environmental issues (Treurnicht, 2002:56). These core aspects are essential in ensuring that contemporary development processes meet human needs and, in the process, ensure that the natural resource base does not suffer degradation (O’Riordan & Jordan, 1995:288). Sustainable development thus calls for the need to appreciate and efficiently utilise resources that are currently available, while keeping the needs of future generations in mind in terms of these resources.

Sustainable development is therefore about being able to meet today’s priorities without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own basic needs (World Commission for Environment and Development, 1987:112; Harris, 2000: 5). This

implies that sustainable development should afford equitable opportunity and access for all, including future generations (World Commission for Environment and Development, 1987: 112). From an environmental perspective, sustainable development characterises a socio-economic process that involves meeting basic human needs, while simultaneously preserving the value of the natural environment (Messay, 2009:96). Sustainable development may also make reference to the need for ecological preservation and balance so as to gratify the human, economic and other needs in a holistic manner, through appropriate resource management mechanisms (Van Rooyen, 2004:85). From this perspective, the implication is that resource management mechanisms need to include management of quantity, quality, as well as the timing and overall direction of resource development.

The difficulty with the notion of sustainable development is that it is viewed differently by different people, opening the door for numerous potential complications in how it should be understood and practised (Redcliff, 2002:276; Harris, 2000: 6). For instance, those who are interested in environmental systems and natural resource conservation often argue for the need to sustain the natural resource base, while others would argue for the need to sustain renewable resources (Messay, 2009:96). In 1987, The World Commission on Environment and Development attempted to bridge the conceptual gap or discrepancy in order to reconcile the concerns of disharmony between environment and development significations of sustainable development (Harris, 2000: 5-6). However, the difficulty then lay in how objectives were to be balanced. In order to resolve this problem, there was a need to acknowledge and appreciate the fact that in doing development there would always be ethical dilemmas, which would render trade-offs an inevitable reality (ibid). Therefore, in order to be able to continue development, there was a need to acknowledge the continuous presence of ethical dilemmas or tensions in doing so, and to try and balance benefits and costs in a way that was able to meet the needs of the present, while also upholding the necessity not to compromise provision for future generations (ibid).

In addition to the above complexities, communities in developing contexts, particularly in rural areas, often have to depend on the natural resource base in order to satisfy their daily needs. As pointed out earlier, natural resource conservation in such contexts may not be a straightforward matter; it may be marred with complexity and may be a solution

that leads to new problems. For instance, it may be difficult to avoid environmental degradation when people are faced with absolute poverty, and the only resource available is from the environment (Van Rooyen, 2004:112). Lack of knowledge and limited or few alternatives may leave people with no choice but to sustain themselves through unsustainable means. Such instances have the potential to undermine sustainable development and livelihood, and need to be taken into consideration when thinking about sustainable development.

## **2.3 The notion of community development**

Community development involves enabling and empowering members of a community in order to enhance their capacities to play a meaningful role in crafting and shaping the life of the community of which they are a part (Craig, 1995). It is about supporting groups and communities to articulate their needs, viewpoints and priorities in order for them to be able to influence decision-making processes that structure the substance of their daily living. Therefore, community development places communities at the centre of the processes of development and is a mechanism to put the power to control their lives back in their hands. It is a process whereby ordinary people are able to participate actively and lead processes of creating and taking advantage of opportunities (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011, Chapters 4-6).

The foundation of community development is the interaction between members of a community in their collective action – collective agency – in pursuance of a common development goal with the purpose of raising the quality of their lives (Flora & Flora, 1993:54-58; UNESCO, 1956). Community development could therefore be construed as *the deployment of progressive community structures* with an intention of addressing social problems and empowering people to participate in finding and implementing their own solutions to their own problems, that is, to be part of the processes of change that they themselves have created (Mendes, 2008:248-262; Mullaly, 2002). It is, in essence, about mobilising and organising community development resources, developing local competencies and mobilising political action for collective problem solving, self-help and empowerment (York, 1984:241-255; Schiele, 2005:21-38).

## 2.4 Approaches to community development

The general purpose of community development is to enhance and improve the livelihoods of citizens in beneficiary communities, especially the socio-economically deprived. The field of human development has not been stagnant; it has been changing in tune with discoveries made and lessons learned during the process of development. As a result, there have been major changes in approaches to development, in tandem with a growing understanding of what the terrain constitutes (Schuurman, 1993; Martinussen, 1997). This section will discuss two main approaches to the community development that have dominated its discourse.

### 2.4.1 The people-centred approach to development

From the perspective of people-centred development, development is understood as a process that empowers members of a community or society by advancing their capacities to take responsibility to mobilise, allocate and manage available resources in order to produce sustainable and equitable improvements to the quality of their lives (Korten, 1990:66). The implication here is that citizens should be in control of their own development, and they must therefore be able to make choices about the meaning of a better life for them (Theron, 2005:116). That is, citizens should be allowed space to actively engage in their own development (Theron & Mchunu, 2016:1-26).

One of the basic tenets of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a transformation map on how the process of reconstructing and developing South Africa was to unfold, was that all processes of development were to be people-centred and people-driven (Republic of South Africa, 1994). From the point of view of the RDP, development was not about the delivery of goods and services to a passive citizenry; it was about mobilising and strengthening mechanisms for ensuring the participation and empowerment of people. The implication here was that authentic development was not about delivering development *to* people, but that it was about people actively shaping and driving processes behind this. Therefore, any development that excluded people from their own development was viewed as a disempowering socio-economic device. In other words, the discourse and politics of development was about inclusion and exclusion.

Therefore, the particular building blocks of the RDP were rooted in the principles of inclusive development, which entailed community participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability (Theron & Mchunu, 2016:17-20). Such a reorientation was a necessary step to reconceptualise and redefine development in line with the new political direction that the country had chosen to take, away from the exclusionary forms that were the essence of separate development, and in which development largely became a tool to subjugate and relegate a large section of citizens to the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder. As such, the reconfigured understanding of how development was to be done within the realm of the RDP signalled a decisive move away from it as exploitation, subservience and disempowerment, to development as a vehicle for dialogue and listening, self-sufficiency and advancement of all citizens (English & Irving, 2015; Theron, 2005:123).

The rationale for the move away from the approach of development to people, to a people-centred approach, was to invite communities back to participate in their own development and to become part of processes that were an attempt to define what development for the people would look like. This implied that people would again be in control of their resources, and have access to information that they could use to improve the quality of their livelihoods. Importantly, there was a need for communities to ensure how to actively participate in the democratic mechanisms of doing development, by holding government accountable for the delivery of basic services, rather than waiting for development to happen to them (Coetzee & Graaff, 2001:25).

Obviously, there are benefits for development in a people-centred way. These include, inter alia, the increase in people's personal and institutional capacities in order to place them in a position to mobilise and manage resources with a view to producing outcomes that are sustainable and justly distributed (Korten, 1990:67). That is, if beneficiaries are allowed space to participate actively in development processes, they have a better chance of becoming self-sufficient, empowered, and being in control of their own lives (Theron, 2009:112). For Mchunu and Theron (2013:113), this kind of active citizenship is only possible when ordinary citizens actively participate in their own spaces for development in order to influence and control their own development. This relates to collaborative decision-making processes like co-production and co-management as indicated by Theron and Mchunu (2016:1 - 26).

### **2.4.2 The feminist approach to development**

The strength of the feminist perspective lies in its interdisciplinary nature in dealing with issues relating to the emancipation of women, as it posits that debates about doing development must pull together the various aspects of human life, and not focus narrowly on “taking the woman out of the kitchen”. Feminist theory therefore focuses on addressing the subordination of women in different settings, be it at home, work or in the political spaces, and therefore calls for the restructuring of social systems in order to ensure that women are able to participate actively in their own emancipation (Moore, 1988:225-298).

Feminist thinking suggests that development serve as a vehicle and device for human progression. Therefore, from the feminist perspective, existing discourses of development that afford women inequitable access to choices and opportunities, and which therefore are biased towards men, have a potentially counterproductive effect on women’s participation in development, as they limit women’s potential to advance and improve their lives (Oxfam Novib, 2008:21). Therefore, gender issues should be at the core of development; that is, gender issues must influence the substance and direction of development discourse. This means that interventions to enhance the livelihoods of women should have a bias towards the advancement of women’s social positioning in order for them to enjoy social benefits (Oxfam Novib, 2008:21).

From the feminist point of view, efforts to reduce poverty and underdevelopment only benefit women if women are afforded access to social, political and economic resources so that they are able to participate and influence the equation of development (Oxfam Novib, 2008:22). However, in order for this to happen, work needs be done in order to address unequal power relations (both hidden and visible) that operate to the disadvantage of women within institutions and in communities.

The business of development must elevate the importance of recognising and changing the agenda of social and political institutions that continue to produce, reproduce and sustain gender inequality (Oxfam Novib, 2008:22). Community development must serve as a way out and as relief for women from the shackles of poverty and inequality.

## 2.5 The concept of sustainable livelihoods

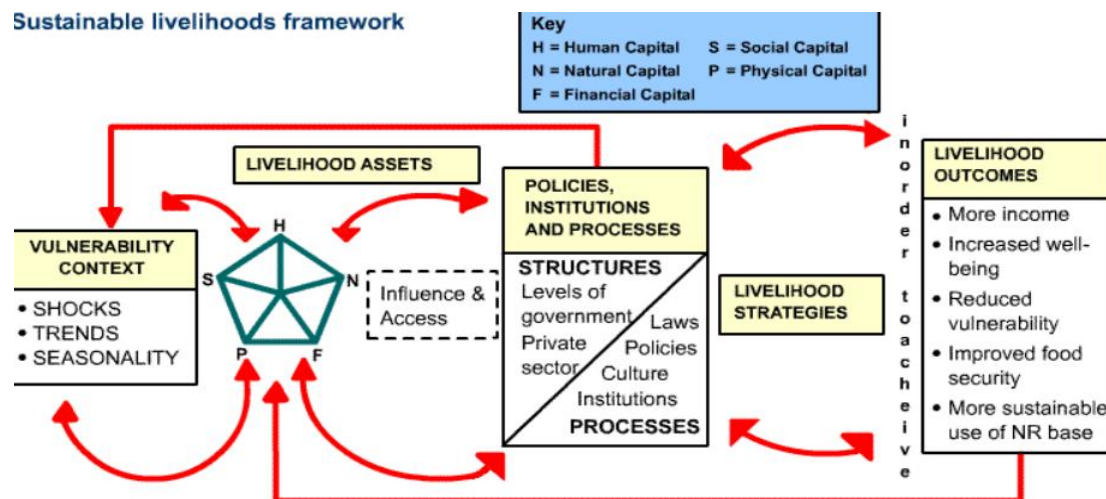
Development discourse is dominated by two approaches to the understanding of sustainable livelihoods. The first approach takes an economic view based on employment, production, as well as household income. The second is more holistic in nature as it integrates conceptions of economic development, reduced vulnerability, as well as ecological sustainability, while it simultaneously acknowledges the empowerment of communities from socially and economically deprived contexts (Scoones, 2009:7).

This study views the latter approach as most suitable when understanding sustainable livelihoods. The signification that is adopted for purposes of this study is along the following lines:

“People’s capacity to generate and maintain their means of living, enhance their well-being and that of future generations ... [these] capacities are contingent upon the availability and accessibility of options which are ecological, economic and political and which are predicated on equity, ownership of resources and participatory decision-making” (Titi & Singh, 1994:56).

The above understanding of sustainable livelihoods highlights the need for community development initiatives to appreciate the capacities of people to manage and cope with the possibilities of risk and uncertainty in doing development. This is useful in realising and relating factors that hamper and/or boost people’s livelihoods, that is, factors that promote capabilities and reduce vulnerabilities (Titi & Singh, 1994:56). In addition, the above conceptualisation also ties in with the concept of sustainable livelihoods (SL), as illustrated below (Department for International Development, 1999:12).





**Figure 2.1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SL Framework)**

**Source:** Scoones (1998:7).

The SL Framework distinguishes between five types of assets or capital upon which livelihoods are built:

- **Human capital:** Comprises knowledge and skills possessed by people, their ability to work and their good health, which makes them able to tackle the varied livelihood strategies to achieve their goals.
- **Social capital:** Includes the social resources from which people obtain capacities to assume various livelihood strategies. Social capital includes social relations, networks, associations and affiliations that enable people to define themselves.
- **Natural capital:** Refers to the natural resource base from which people derive a range of necessities for sustainable livelihoods (i.e. which make life possible). These include water, soil and other important natural resources.
- **Physical capital:** Comprises basic infrastructure and other goods necessary for the enhancement of livelihoods.
- **Economic or financial capital:** Refers to the financial resources necessary to support livelihoods. These economic assets range from cash, liquid assets, livestock, income, to any other forms of remittances that can be used to pursue livelihood strategies.

For people to be able to enhance their livelihoods, these types of capital have to come into play in interrelated, coordinated ways. This means that they must have access to assets such as personal abilities, tangible assets, and financial as well as natural capital (Chambers & Conway, 1991:18).

One aspect of capital is social capital. The social capital aspect is linked to the concept of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), defined by Johnson (1992:21) as “a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact”. Such knowledge is constantly built and adapted to meet the needs, standards and conditions of local people. This implies that IKS’s is a product of the contextual configurations of a specific community, and that access to it can only be gained through direct contact with that particular community (Sillitoe, 2002:149). IKS’s has to do with several aspects of the community, such as ways of knowing and doing in various disciplinary areas (e.g. agriculture and horticulture, astronomy, forestry, human health, traditional medicines and healing, knowledge of animals, fish and ecological systems, sustainable use of natural resources and the environment) (Brascoupe & Mann, 2001:3). Therefore, from a community development point of view, IKS’s provides a rich resource for localised solutions to the challenges that people face in their lives in general, and in the business of development in particular.

IKS’s is therefore an important component of social capital. In the context of people from rural settings, it can be argued that indigenous knowledge provides “the social capital of the poor”, the power to navigate the contour of life (Gorjestani, 2005:6). That is, the indigenous knowledge that people possess, is their mainstay of social values, social interaction and integration, knowledge creation and distribution, and should be tapped upon in order to localise and enrich solutions to problems of development. Putnam (1994: 5-19) argues that IKS’s is capable of being exchanged and transferred, particularly because it comprises not just information and knowledge as resources, but also skills and capabilities that are necessary for human development (Antweiler, 1996). The skills and capabilities that communities possess are therefore a ready resource that could be utilised when addressing the needs, problems and objectives of local people. Therefore, in working with communities, development stakeholders must not disregard the knowledge that people have created and used to cope with their social and natural environment, but must identify and integrate it into their development programmes and

approaches (Murdoch & Clark, 1994:115-132). In that way, IKS's becomes a useful resource that is utilised to develop sustainable ways of development, and empowers communities in their efforts to become self-sufficient (Øyen, 2002:12).

Some literature has indicated that the sustainable rural livelihoods (SRL) approach derives from “the post-Rio consensus”<sup>2</sup>, which highlights the need for communities to manage natural resources in order to realise sustainable development (McDowell, 2002:187). However, proponents of the SRL approach have argued that the consensus was founded on mistaken assumptions that rural communities in developing areas are homogenous rather than heterogeneous. Their counter-view has been that, given the platform to do so, communities are quite capable of productively controlling and managing their relationship with the ecosystem in a manner that works towards achieving goals for sustainable development.

An alternative view that sees communities as heterogeneous highlights the necessity for understanding processes of rural change in a way that appreciates the heterogeneity of power and interests existing within different communities, with a particular focus on marginalised social groups (Scoones, 1998:7; McDowell, 2002:187). This view is in line with 1990s' studies on inter- and intra-community differentiation, common in studies on rural research (Murray, 1981; Spiegel, 1995). The approach attempts to understand and frame issues of poverty and marginalisation from a perspective of access (i.e. the interplay between inclusion and exclusion) to livelihood capital, as well as the part assumed by some organisations that may favour some social groups at the expense of others (Carney, 1998). Within this framework of understanding, people are perceived as capable of acting logically and imaginatively in their pursuit of various livelihood objectives necessary for them to improve the quality of their lives (Department for International Development, 1999:17). Therefore, rather than being passive participants in the development processes, people have agency, which they

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<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), widely known as the Rio Earth Summit, was held June 3-14, 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Rio Summit focused on developing a global framework for addressing environmental degradation through sustainable development.

partly draw from their social capital and indigenous knowledge resources (Theron & Mchunu, 2016:1-26).

As alluded to earlier, the significance of the SL approach is in its recognition of the potential of people to tap into natural resources to improve livelihoods. Murray (1981:151) has pointed out that there is a need to understand people's conditions of poverty and the reasons behind those conditions. This understanding could be achieved through a careful evaluation of existing social relations, more especially the historical context that exists between "haves" and "have nots" in terms of access to land, as well as institutions of the market (ibid). Murray's (1981) argument is that such a view would give an indication that desires of livelihood reigning in the households may be very different. For instance, people in rural areas draw their livelihood from different sources, ranging from migrant workers who take up jobs in urban areas or other rural areas, to farming and other informal income generating projects like brewing traditional beer for sale.

From this context specific understanding, it is clear that rural livelihood diversification is an option that could be deployed by people to survive poverty and underdevelopment. This confirms Bekele's (2008:92) notion that diversifying livelihood sources in order to address challenges of poverty could reduce the vulnerability of the poor and food insecurity, which may sometimes be as a result of environmental changes. This points to the possibility that the traditional livelihood approach, which relied exclusively on farming, has been moving towards other varying livelihood approaches (ibid). For instance, in contemporary society, access to microcredit and other opportunities for people in socio-economically deprived contexts have resulted in a shift from depending solely on agriculture towards other forms of income-generating possibilities in order to meet their socio-economic needs.

Ruben and Piters (2005:13) have argued that rural poverty often emanates from various structural factors, such as scarcity of capital, lack of knowledge, low labour productivity, failing institutions, and others. Studies on poverty have revealed that rural poverty is as a result of a lack of empowerment, as well as access to relevant services, resources and assets (Tearfund, 2002:78). Therefore, an effective rural sustainable livelihood calls for the mobilisation of available resources in order to ensure that local

knowledge-based socio-economic methods include diversification of opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. In terms of the above cases, the local meaning – giving context of communities must be prioritized (Kotzé & Kotzé 2016: 61 - 83).

Having discussed concepts of sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods, the following section now turns to rural development and its dynamics.

## 2.6 Integrated sustainable rural development strategy

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) was adopted as a community development strategy that would complement the RDP and bring about socially cohesive and stable rural communities (Mbeki, 1999). Announced by then President Thabo Mbeki, the ISRDS was based on the following important dimensions:

- **Integration:** The co-ordination of development activities at local government level through integrated development plans (IDPs).
- **Rural development:** Multi-dimensional focus to development, with the intention of improving the provision of services and enhancing local economic growth for rural poor people.
- **Sustainability:** This contributes to local growth and features local participation and ownership, where people care about their success and are able to keep the strategies going.
- **Rural social security safety net:** The existence of rural safety nets as an integral part of the ISRDS (The Presidency, 2000: vi).

As can be discerned from the above, the ISRDS had a bias towards rural settings and development, and was an attempt to expand opportunities and improve well-being for the rural poor (The Presidency, 2000: 26). However, the significance of the concept of rural development, like other concepts, is often taken for granted and therefore left undefined and unproblematised. Almost thirty years ago, Poostchi (1986:1) warned that the meaning and signification of rural development could not be taken for granted because:

“[How] it works, and the shape it takes is determined and influenced by many factors in the rural areas ... such as the stage of economic development of the country, the

humanitarian attitudes of its people, the sincerity, skill, wisdom and all-round knowledge of its planners, administrators, and implementers at all levels, the relevant educational institutions; the extent to which its citizens are informed, consulted and encouraged to participate; and other factors of varying importance at the local, village, area, regional and national levels, all affect its direction, its magnitude, its success and also its failure” Poostchi, 1986:1).

This caution points to complexities in the understandings of the concept of rural development, that its “... complex style of economic, social and political alteration” often comes into play when new ways and understandings of doing development are adopted (Poostchi, 1986:3). Therefore, objectives of rural development policies and ways of attaining them must include, inter alia, considerations for sustainable economic growth, reduction of unemployment and alleviation of the effects of poverty, broad participation of rural people, as well as mechanisms for encouraging and nurturing self-reliance (Poostchi, 1986:3). In other words, rural development must enhance rural livelihoods, and change circumstances of communities in order to improve the quality of their lives.

Therefore, a country that neglects rural development runs a risk of depriving its economy of an important contribution that communities could make. In contrast, a country that provides opportunities and scaffolding mechanisms for the poorest of its people to participate and contribute to the form and shape of the development agenda in essence activates “... the latent productive potential ...” that would have otherwise been lost (Thorbecke, 1992:86). A country that does not have focused programmes for rural development is depriving its people of a productive life.

Rural development could therefore be understood as a way of achieving sustainable rural development, when people from rural areas are equipped with the skills necessary for them to initiate and sustain their own development. Such can only be achieved when there is a deliberate mobilisation of communities to participate in determining and addressing their needs and priorities through sustainable rural development programmes. However, these programmes should be informed by what is obtained on the ground (Kotzé & Kotzé 2016: 61 - 83). That is, for empowering development to be realised there is a need for development stakeholders to understand people first in their

specific local circumstances, the nature of their needs and their problems (Serageldin & Steeds, 1997:52; Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 20 -32). In order to do so, development stakeholders must “design, implement, and evaluate activities with the rural people, not for them, because development is something people do, not something done for them” (Serageldin & Steeds, 1997:52; Theron & Mchunu, 2016: 1- 26).

Rural development must, therefore, be able to pull together different aspects of development planning rather than focus on development as a narrow field. Good quality social services, such as education and healthcare, must also be ensured in order to place rural communities in a better position to maximise potential (Serageldin & Steeds, 1997). For instance, the role of local government and other local development stakeholders must converge towards encouraging community participation in development processes, in order to improve the capacity of people to lead and participate in their own development – community members must be placed at the centre of rural development processes, programmes and activities. The implication here is that communities must not only be part and parcel of local development programmes and projects: they must be allowed space to participate maximally. The rationale for such a position is that rural development strategies can only reach their full potential through active engagement, motivation and organisation at grassroots level (Burkey, 1993:56).

The section below now turns to the role of women and their contribution to rural development.

### **2.6.1 Women in rural development**

When women are economically and socially empowered, they are likely to become a potent force for change (IFAD, 2011:1). In rural areas, particularly in the developing world, women play a key role in running households and contributing to agricultural production and other activities. However, the inequalities that exist in society make it difficult for women to fulfil their potential (IFAD, 2011:1).

There are many ways in which women are excluded from participating in development initiatives. For instance, curricula of schools are often skewed towards domestic



activities when it comes to the education of girls (Boserup, 1970:122). That is, the role of women in society is often confined to housekeeping, and there are frequently social barriers that deprive women of opportunities to participate in the socio-economic development of their communities. Women therefore often have limited opportunities in society, except for minimal participation in agricultural activities, which are largely family based and not entrepreneurial in nature.

In contemporary society, the contribution of women in development programmes cannot be ignored. For instance, despite a large proportion of women being engaged in subsistence activities, some women are gradually becoming instrumental in initiatives to improve the livelihoods of their families (Republic of South Africa, 2015). Many women are still regarded as only good for domestic work, and this disparity may largely be attributed to the fact that there are sections of society that still regard women as the weaker sex and second-class citizens. As a result, although great strides have been taken to ensure the inclusion of women in the mainstream economy, a large proportion of women are still marginalised, particularly those from communities in socio-economic deprived areas (ibid).

The continued existence of a category of people who are denied an opportunity to participate in processes of improving their households and communities is unfortunate, particularly in a country such as South Africa, with high rates of poverty and unemployment. The continued exclusion of women in development initiatives and programmes has dire consequences for the country's economy, and human well-being in general. If this exclusion of women is not addressed with immediate effect, human well-being is likely to dwindle at an accelerating pace in the coming decades (Abramovitz & Roberta, 1992:85).

Literature reveals that women participate far less in development projects than their male counterparts and, when they do, they only participate during implementation stages. This means that women are excluded at crucial levels of the development process, such as conceptualisation, planning and evaluation (Anand, 1984:6). This marginalisation neglects the importance of the potential contribution of women in addressing the needs and priorities of their communities. The result is often that development projects targeting women do not take off because women are not



adequately included in the crucial planning processes (Maddock, 1994:185). Such exclusion leads to women being further relegated an inferior status.

However, there is another dimension to the exclusion of women in development programmes and projects. For instance, projects are likely to be deprived of the contribution that women would have otherwise made had they participated and, without the full and equal participation of women, projects are unlikely to succeed, particularly in communities where women are a majority (Mayoux, 1992: 91-114). This points to the necessity for active participation of women in the development of their communities. Rural development policies will not yield positive results if the contribution of women is not considered, and consequences of this would be dire for both the economy and societal well-being (Gabriel, 1991). If development is to serve as a source of advancement and empowerment, then it stands to reason that it must be a process that is equitably accessible for all sections of society. This implies that women should have a say in the distribution of development resources in order for them to get their equitable share from the stake of development.

The next section is a discussion of some of the challenges that women face in their efforts towards rural development and sustainable livelihoods.

### **2.6.2 Barriers to sustainable rural development**

There are glaring disparities in the impact of development on women in South Africa, for women from urban and rural contexts. In fact, research evidence reveals that rural women are the most neglected, and are often constant losers in the game of development (Meer, 1998:21).

Women in socio-economically deprived contexts, like all women, have a crucial part to play in contributing to economic growth (Songelwa, 2009:68). For instance, there is evidence that women produce about 80 per cent of the food consumed in Africa (World Food Summit, 1996:16). Therefore, excluded categories of women remain an untapped resource that could contribute significantly to economic development, and development processes would fare much better if all women were fully included in the development

process, instead of being left out or required to use their time in activities that are not as productive (Moser, 1993:56).

The section below raises some factors that affect the livelihoods of women, especially those from poor rural areas. The objective of the discussion is to outline some of the challenges faced by rural women, and how these serve as barriers in their lives.

### **2.6.2.1 *Climate change and environmental degradation***

In their efforts to obtain basic needs such as food and water, human activities have largely affected the ecosystem (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), 2005:5). Despite benefiting a rich few, the associated costs of degradation mainly affect the poor, and most regions likely to fall short of meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs) are those affected by ecosystemic degradation challenges (ibid). Findings of the MEA investigation on the state of the ecosystem revealed that changes in variables such as a population of a region had the potential to negatively affect the drivers of biodiversity change, ecosystemic services and eventually human welfare (ibid). In that regard, MEA suggested particular changes be made that would positively impact on sustainability objectives. These changes located the need for change in the institutions and governance, economic policies and incentives, social and behaviour factors, technology and knowledge (MEA, 2005:17). This was an important shift in that the poor mostly depend on the ecosystem for their livelihoods, and therefore ecosystem degradation is likely to negatively affect their livelihoods.

The impact of climate change on livelihoods cannot be underestimated. Greenhouse gas emissions have been linked to weaker agriculture production, deforestation and the burning of fossil fuels (Stern, 2006:1-10). The increase in drought-prone areas globally has an impact on food security, availability of water and the general health of people. If ecosystem degradation is not addressed, it is likely to lead to reduced productivity by small-scale subsistence farmers who rely on rain-fed agriculture (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007:17).

### **2.6.2.2 Poverty and inequality**

Poverty and inequality are an impediment to the growth potential of sustainable rural livelihoods. Current levels of inequality have largely been attributed to the lack of investment in rural economies. The lack of investment, together with urbanisation, has resulted in rural areas lagging behind with regards to basic services, such as infrastructure (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2010:19). As a result, small-scale rural farmers are often unable to participate competitively in commercial business activities, and this has a disabling and constraining effect on the potential of rural communities to achieve sustainable livelihoods (ibid). With respect to gender, inequality affects rural women's ability to obtain resources necessary for production more severely than women in socio-economically well-off contexts (Abedi, Allahyari & Khodamoradi, 2011: 6579-6585).

### **2.6.2.3 Food security**

There is food security when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs, and food preferences (World Food Summit, 1996:16). The significance of this definition of food security is that it incorporates dimensions that are essential for sustainable livelihoods. These include availability (of sufficient food quantities), access (to sufficient resources for obtaining the right food for a good diet), utilisation (of food through sufficient diet, sanitation, clean water and healthcare) and, finally, stability (access to sufficient food every time and not risking loss of access to food) (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2006:1).

Such an understanding of food security also allows for the evaluation of food security that is linked to issues of poverty. For instance, the availability of food is directly linked to production. Ordinarily, it is poor people who find themselves unable to generate adequate food supplies for their households due to a variety of reasons, including lack of access to production resources, as well as adverse climatic conditions (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2008:22). As a result, food supplies are inequitably distributed, resulting in many rural populations having access to less food than the required dietary amounts (ibid). For instance, the Food and Agriculture Organization (2008:22) predicted that the developing world would fall short of the World Food Summit hunger reduction goal in 2015, and that more people would be undernourished than in 1990 in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Near East. This became a reality at the end

of 2015. Given the inequitable distribution of resources in society, this is likely to impact on more women than men.

#### **2.6.2.4 Poverty**

Poverty and food security issues are inseparable. The inability of the poor to produce and access sufficient amounts of food affects their livelihoods. As prices increase in food and agricultural inputs, such as fertiliser and seed, this is likely to negatively affect productivity and the availability of food (IFAD, 2010:19). The increase in food prices is caused by, amongst other variables, decline in agricultural productivity, which could be as a result of the reduction in agricultural investment, as well as lack of support from governments. Other contributing variables include natural disasters, such as drought, floods, and severe hot or cold temperatures (FAO, 2008:22). Investing in agriculture through improving productivity, as well as the agricultural policies are factors that could enhance food security and make a difference in efforts to alleviate poverty, particularly in socio-economically deprived rural areas.

This implies the need for small-scale rural farmers to be supported so that they are able to effectively supply communities with adequate food (IFAD, 2010:20). However, it is worth mentioning that, in the process of alleviating poverty through agriculture, caution must be taken to preserve natural resources, and that agriculture today must use the scarce and fragile natural resources on which it is based more carefully, and therefore be environmentally aware in order to remain sustainable and resilient to increasing climatic variability (IFAD, 2010:9).

The above discussion on sustainable development and livelihoods points to the need to end poverty, while at the same time not causing harm to the natural ecosystem that enables human survival. Important to note is that, in order to satisfy the needs of the world's poor populations, the global economy will have to be restructured in order to become inclusive (Swilling & Annecke, 2012:72).

## 2.7 Strategies for sustainable livelihoods

The following is a discussion of some examples of sustainable livelihood strategies.

### 2.7.1 Building and protecting human capital

This strategy is about *respecting and appreciating* the right to sustainable livelihood. This is rooted in the need to build the capital of people, especially the rural poor. For example, communities participating in development projects could be assisted to access financial services to improve their productivity (Kapungu, 2013:39). This could also involve the improvement of working conditions, on the basis of the understanding that a healthy worker is often a productive worker.

### 2.7.2 Encouraging stakeholder responsibility

This strategy concerns the *protection* of the right to a sustainable livelihood. It calls upon institutions, such as government, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, to evaluate their policies in order to ensure that they, in so far as possible, lead to sustainable effects and cater for the needs of socio-economically deprived categories of people, such as those living in rural areas (Oxfam Novib, 2008:62).

### 2.7.3 Creating opportunities

This strategy is about *fulfilling* the right to a sustainable livelihood. The strategy focuses on creating conducive conditions for the poor to be able to participate actively in decision-making regarding their development. This means that the rules of doing development should ensure that the poor are included in the mainstream development economy. For example, emphasis could be placed on the need for the poor to be integrated in market value chains and, at the same time, ensure that they are protected from import competition (Oxfam Novib, 2008:63). Essentially, the strategy is about generating opportunities for people with the right assets in order for them to gain from trade links (ibid).

## **2.8 The role of development stakeholders in sustainable development**

The significance of the contribution of rural communities to democracy and economic development cannot be overemphasised. Democracy and development cannot be sustained without the effective participation of communities (Theron, Ceasar, Mchunu & Draai, 2016: 115-147).

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of women participating in selected development projects for sustainable livelihoods. A study about participation in community development projects cannot be concluded without a discussion of the roles of development stakeholders in the processes of development. Therefore, this section discusses the role of key development stakeholders and institutions that have a potential influence on the direction and shape of community development interventions (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:20-32). The thinking adopted in this study is that the role of development stakeholders in community development processes constitutes a foundational element of successful community development. For instance, development stakeholders have a crucial role to play in contributing to the efforts of eradicating poverty and underdevelopment, particularly in socio-economically deprived communities (Streeten, 1997:193-210).

Support from development stakeholders may take different forms, including funding for projects, provision of basic project infrastructure, awareness raising and advocacy, microfinance and legal aid. Development stakeholders may also assist individuals and communities by providing them with technical support and capacity building, which is an essential building block of community development (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:41 – 60). Therefore, the catalogue of services provided by various development stakeholders assists communities in realising their abilities, skills and knowledge.

Below is a discussion of some of the areas where development stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring that community development results in the improvement of the quality of life for communities.

### **2.8.1 Poverty reduction**

Poverty affecting women in a rural context seems to be aggravated by a variety of factors. The transformations in household and family structure have resulted in increasing numbers of female-headed households and/or the weakening of household survival strategies. Exposure to poverty tends to increase the constraints under which communities have to live, provide for their families, and contribute to national food security (Desai, 2005:90-98). In many communities, women are the main providers of food, water and fuel, and are therefore responsible for the well-being of families and communities. Given this background, it can be argued that rural women's social and economic progress has to be supported within the structure of national and local plans for social and economic development. If this is to happen, development stakeholders have to play a role that makes development benefit communities in an equitable manner.

The reduction and alleviation of poverty is a big task and cannot be fulfilled through isolated incidents of support; it requires collaborative functioning between communities in which development is happening and development practitioners who are supposed to assist communities in designing and implementing solutions that are capable of addressing their own specific challenges. Therefore, collaboration and partnership between communities and development stakeholders is critical for the success of community development initiatives (Kakumba & Nsingo, 2008:116; Theron & Mchunu, 2016: 1 - 26). This cooperation has to be supported and reinforced at all stages of development interventions, rather than be applied selectively. This means that development stakeholders must be able to apply development policies in a manner that empowers communities, particularly vulnerable sections of communities, such as women, to participate and drive their own development.

The above implies that there is a need to mobilise political will at local, national and international levels to target vulnerable sections of communities (such as women and the poor) to become active participants and main beneficiaries of community development programmes (Kakumba & Nsingo, 2008:116). The intention is to ensure that their economic needs and well-being are well-considered in development programmes, and that their role is enhanced and they are able to participate actively and

productively in the planning and implementation of development interventions and in the distribution of resources to assist processes of community development (Muller, 2016: 269- 290; Chapter 10 in Theron & Mchunu (eds.) 2016).

### **2.8.2 Provision of financial resources**

Lack of access to financial resources is an impediment to community development. Being financially incapacitated reduces the ability of communities to undertake and participate in development projects, and this has a negative effect on the delivery of rural development (Kakumba & Nsingo, 2008:116). Compared to large and professional institutions, which usually have access to large amounts of human and financial resources, rural communities are often geographically inaccessible and for that reason they are often out of reach of available financial services providers (Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade, 2009:11). Due to their lack of management skills, which is often acute, progress into viable businesses is often not possible for many of these communities. Small-scale businesses from these communities are often considered as a low-margin and high-risk activity, which investors would not want to do business with as they prefer stable entities and activities along the value chain that are not likely to end in financial loss for them (ibid).

In this regard, development stakeholders and agencies could assist emerging rural entrepreneurs in terms of networking, partnerships, capacity building and linkages for development (Saide, 2006:18). Therefore, development stakeholders and agencies have a crucial role to play in, for instance, facilitating business links between rural community development projects and external investors, development experts, private sector and government agencies in order to minimise the distance of communities to the resources that are required for development. If development stakeholders are able to play their role in a robust manner, this would enable communities to access resources they need to satisfy their development needs, which might have otherwise evaded them (Gibb, 1996:47). If communities are networked and have mutually beneficial social relations with development stakeholders and agencies, this has a potential to better place emerging entrepreneurs in rural communities in positions where they could have reasonable access to information and market opportunities (ibid). Such networking



might also result in direct support in terms of cooperative efforts, raising funds, leadership as well as entrepreneurship development (Saide, 2006:19).

In order to aid processes of community entrepreneurial development, development stakeholders and agencies could assist entrepreneurs from socio-economically disadvantaged contexts in conducting market research exercises in order to identify opportunities for possible diversification in order to expand their market base, and promote growth (Vyakarnam, 1990:4). In recognition of the significance of job creation and conducive environments for women entrepreneurs, development stakeholders and agencies could facilitate sponsorships for projects owned and operated by women for entrepreneurship and income generation. Development stakeholders could identify opportunities for women to establish cooperative business initiatives and to set up business systems in order to access opportunities and capabilities to access credit services. In addition, women's groups could be promoted as a strategy to increase access to information, relative bargaining power and platforms for combined action to access economic inputs.

### **2.8.3 Promoting capacity building**

Access to relevant information and knowledge sharing through communication is one of the biggest challenges facing rural people (Patel, 1998:215). Both knowledge and information are produced and shared through dialogue and interaction, a process that results in critical reflection and action (Freire & Shor, 1987:7). Critical reflection and participatory action are essential ingredients in knowledge and skills building, aspects that are important for active participation in decision-making processes pertaining to development (Theron, Elliot- Wetmore & Malan, 2016:317-342).

Knowledge can be both formal or scientific, and non-formal and undocumented, which is part and parcel of the indigenous knowledge system. Previously in this chapter, the significance of IKS's was discussed as knowledge that is naturally produced by local communities and based within the people themselves, including beliefs and perceptions shared by these people (Treurnicht, 2000:93; Chambers, 1989:83). The strength of IKS's rests in the fact that it is embedded in the context of the people who have used it to solve their own problems in order to improve their livelihoods (Kotzé & Kotzé

2016:61 -83). However, despite its potential as a local resource, indigenous knowledge has often been undermined as primitive by development stakeholders and agencies, and has therefore not been fully mobilised in order to strengthen community development processes and to benefit communities (Chambers, 1997:131). Often, development stakeholders and agencies have wanted to import external solutions in order to solve development challenges in communities.

Local knowledge and solutions must therefore be taken into account when various capacity-building programmes are initiated for communities by government departments, NGOs and other development stakeholders in order to equip socio-economically deprived communities with the requisite skills required in order to enable them to drive their own development (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:26 – 27). Funding for such activities could be obtained through donor funds, as well as the National Development Agency, which is set up specifically for that reason.

Literacy levels have serious implications for issues of productivity and development. Education opportunities, especially for women and other socio-economically vulnerable groups, are fundamental aspects of sustainable livelihoods and capacity building. Discrepancies in levels of literacy for some women in rural areas call for the urgent need to integrate women into the mainstream of technological and economic empowerment programmes. These are some of the issues that development stakeholders could pursue in order to ensure that communities experience development as a holistic endeavour.

## **2.9 Summary**

This chapter discussed literature and concepts relating to sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods. From the discussion it emerged that, when issues of sustainable development and livelihoods are considered, it should be done with due regard to the political, socio-economic, as well as the cultural contexts in which the concepts are entrenched.

An argument was made that sustainable development is about trying to ensure a balance between human economic development and protection of the environment, and this calls for the incorporation of social, environmental and economic approaches in dealing with issues on the development agenda. Thus, the equilibrium between developmental practices and environmental protection could be achieved through respecting the principles of sustainable development, which would in turn guide communities and development stakeholders towards the path of development while at the same time encouraging them to preserve resources in order for future generations to be able to meet their needs and priorities of the time.

A key learning from this chapter was the fact that development becomes sustainable when people fully comprehend it and are able to attach their own meaning to it. However, the chapter also acknowledged that the implementation of these notions is not unproblematic, and that it is likely to meet contextual hurdles that would need to be considered as part of the package of development. These would need development stakeholders and agencies to position themselves and their work in ways that are empowering to communities.

Tied to the question of development stakeholders and agencies, the chapter highlighted the importance of the role of development stakeholders in clearing the path for inclusive community development, in such areas as policy making, implementation and decision making in development processes. This elevated the importance of the understanding of development as collaborative and co-produced action towards sustainable development.

The following chapter discusses and analyses literature regarding the concepts of community participation and rural development.

## CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Introduction

The ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) policy document of 1994 elevates the importance of community participation in democratic governance and community development (Republic of South Africa, 1994). The document foregrounds the importance of participation of all citizens in order to empower them to participate and influence democratic processes, and therefore be able to participate actively in the reconstruction and development processes of their country (ibid).

There are clear grounds for why community participation had to be foregrounded by the democratic government. Such a stance is based almost exclusively on the reason that policies of the apartheid regime denied the majority of citizens their right to participate in the affairs of their own country (Tshabalala, 2006:46; Masango, 2002: 52-65; Makgoba & Ababio, 2004:272-289). Such an undemocratic system of governance brought about anger and frustration, which fuelled a number of protest actions against public policies that excluded them. The protests by citizens were a message to future political leaders that the only way to work in South Africa was with local communities by enhancing their participation in decision-making processes (Chapter 5 in Theron & Mchunu (eds.), 2016 114- 147).

As a result, the new democratic government had to ensure that it broke away from this past, that the majority of the country's population had an opportunity to influence policy directions, and that their right to participate in the development of their own communities was elevated as high priority. In that view, community participation, especially in the context of the very nature of democracy, was a significant democratising concern in government's efforts of driving the reconstruction and development project, and community development in particular, for a better life for all (Oakley & Marsden, 1984:18).

### 3.2 Community participation defined

The concept of community participation is elusive, as there are different views as to what constitutes community participation (Theron, Ceasar, Mchunu & Draai 2016:114-147). For some, the notion implies active participation in political processes, while for others the notion is meaningless unless the people concerned have reasonable power and control over decision-making processes of the organisations to which they belong.

The additional complexity of the notion of community participation is in that it has been romanticised to such an extent that it is hardly deconstructed. As a result, “community participation” has become one of the most taken-for-granted, yet least understood concepts, as there has not been any serious attempt to critically deconstruct the varied significations that the concept of participation in community participation could take (Oakley, 1991).

The notion of “community” derives from the Latin *communis*, which denotes common, public, shared by all or many (Schulenkorf, 2012: 1-12). The concept of community is closely akin to the hope and wish to resuscitate convergent, intimate, and closer ties between people with often different interests (Elias, 1974: xiii). A community is therefore construed as a space where solidarity, participation and coherence prescribe the order of things (Purdue, et al.2000; Taylor, 2003). A community may thus be understood as a web of social relations characterised by relations of mutual dependence and reciprocal interdependencies (Schulenkorf, 2011: 1-12).

In literature, there is overall agreement of a distinction between geographical and interest communities. A geographical community refers to a population of a particular geographical area – a territorial community, whereas an interest community does not require physical proximity but rather focuses on people who share something in common, such as a collective interest, as a functional community (Anderson, 1983; Willmott, 1988). Interest communities could include people from different local regions or geographical communities who are in *gemeinschaft* [togetherness] with others from other communities. Often, these ensembles or social groups are bound together by the fact that they share a combination of interests and specific characteristics, such as talent,

religion, political ideology, commitment to a particular course or some other form of pursuit that binds them together as a collective (Ife, 1995; Willmott, 1988). Examples of interest communities could include the deaf, Christian, development, academic, or gay and lesbian communities.

Interest communities tend to be bound together by affiliation, interaction and a common sense of self, even if the relationships among members are less intimate and more infrequent than those between close acquaintances. Such a community could be described as the “imagined community” (Schulenkorf, 2012: 1-12), where people share deep sentiments, convictions or beliefs and, through this, make sense of their lives in what may otherwise seem a complicated, intricate and unknown world (Schulenkorf, 2012: 1-12). An “imagined community” can at the same time be affixed in local places and defy localities, so that people may feel part of the group despite not having physically met or communicated with each other (Appadurai, 1996).

The definition of community adopted in this study has characteristics of both a geographical and interest community, as the study explores the experiences of women participating in two community development projects. The two community development projects are situated in Maqongqo Village, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, and members of the two projects have grouped themselves according to their particular interests in aspects of development, namely, sewing and gardening.

Turning to community participation, there have been calls for the recognition of the importance of active community participation in development processes (Midgley, 1986:24; Theron & Mchunu, 2014:9-14). Community participation refers to the creation of opportunities that allow space for members of a community to actively input and influence processes in the development endeavour, and to draw equitable benefits from the proceeds of the development endeavour. The idea of community participation is akin to the principle of community-driven development, whereby community members are at the centre of the development endeavour and have control over the direction and shape of the development process.

Reference to control over the shape and direction of the development process has connotations of an empowered community, which means that community participation

can only happen when communities are able to mobilise themselves and assume responsibility for managing the development issues and challenges that affect them. This means that community participation is realised when all stakeholders, citizens and communities are actively participating, and consensus on decisions is reached and receives legitimacy and mandate. This means that the reason for the participation of community stakeholders, citizens and communities is not by external exertion or coercion, but happens because they have chosen to participate and have committed themselves to the development process (eThekweni Municipality Community Participation Policy, 2006:23).

The above conceptualisation of community participation stems from the understanding that nobody has monopoly of defining and determining needs in a community; the exercise of defining and determining needs is a product of a collective (Taylor, 1994:54). However, Taylor (1994) further suggests that this does not imply that capacity to participate actively in the development process is inborn – that it already exists in every community. Rather, communities may require guidance from development stakeholders in defining, articulating and clarifying their needs and priorities. In other cases, development stakeholders may expose them to a catalogue of options and approaches that may be new to them, but that development stakeholders would explain in such a way that communities are able to use these to make informed choices as to which options and approaches they want to pursue. However, as is evident, development stakeholders may not make choices on behalf of communities or impose their choices on communities as this may take away the opportunity and ability of communities to participate in their own development. So, community participation here subscribes to the notion that nothing about community should happen without community (Theron & Mchunu, 2016:1-26).

Expanding from Taylor's definition, Sproule (1996:236) defines community participation as the process of "giving people ... opportunities to participate effectively in development activities, empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be social actors rather than passive subjects, manage the resources, make decisions and control the activities that affect their lives". This conception highlights the view that community participation must involve the creation of opportunities for citizens so that they are in a position to actively participate in the development process, while at the

same time equitably sharing the fruits of development (United Nations, 1981:5). The core of this conception lies in the thinking that community development can only successfully take place if beneficiaries of the same outcomes are part of the planning and implementation process, which means that there can be no development for the people without the people.

In a socio-economically deprived context, such as in a rural development with very little or no access to resources for the development of human capital, community participation would therefore call for the empowering of people through appropriate skills development programmes. This would enable them to meaningfully participate in the development process and to influence decision-making processes regarding their development needs and priorities (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:2).

From such a perspective, it can then be argued that the rationale for community participation is to integrate the needs and values of citizens into the business of development. Therefore, the main goal for community participation is not only to influence policy and decision-making processes, but also to direct and shape it. This means that the community should be allowed space to decide and drive the direction of their own development (Theron & Ceasar, 2008:112). Community participation within the context of development is therefore not just driven by purposes of consultation or involvement, but it is a process through which communities mobilise themselves in order to identify their needs, to share in design, to implement as well as to assess their participatory action (Kumar, 2002:24). Therefore, community participation has elements of the democratic approach to public policy, planning and development, which means that development can only be for the people if they have been allowed to influence decision-making processes in matters that affect their lives (Nekwaya, 2007:11).

From the above conceptions, it could thus be understood that participation is about allowing space and/or developing the capacity of people to act on their own thinking and deliberations in order to achieve the objectives they have laid down for themselves for their own development Cornwall & Coelho (2007). As conscious subjects, they have a right to take action, reflect on their actions, and make the changes they deem necessary in their development project. Therefore, the assumption is that if people are allowed



space to act on their problems, this is likely to contribute to a greater capacity to innovate in ways that enhance livelihoods, and thus advance the development agenda by the people for the people (Kakumba & Nsingo, 2008:107).

### 3.3 Principles of community participation

Effective community participation demands the appreciation of the principles of the Manila Declaration of 1989 (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:11-12). The Declaration underlines the fact that only development that is focused on citizens will empower them to exercise control over the resources allocated to improve their livelihoods. It therefore calls for communities to work for their development and to deal with the impediments that may occur during the development process. In line with this thinking, the Manila Declaration (1989) outlines the following principles of community participation:

- **Sovereignty resides with the people, the real actors of positive change.** This implies that communities are key players in, and owners of, the development process; thus, denouncing the characterisation of community members as passive recipients of development programmes and projects.
- **To exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for development, people must have control over their own resources, have access to relevant information and have the means to hold government accountable.** This speaks to active participation by communities, whereby people are able to hold accountable those that should effect policies and provide them with information and assistance in order for community members to participate actively in the development processes.
- **The legitimate role of government is to enable the people to set and pursue their own development agenda.** From this perspective, local and other spheres of government must ensure communities are afforded opportunities and/or platforms to deliberate and direct the planning and implementation of their development.
- **Those who are assisting the people with their development must recognise that whatever they are doing, they are doing in support of the people's agenda and not the reverse.** Therefore, the value of the presence of development stakeholders, for instance, as outsiders, will only be measured by

the extent to which they have enhanced the capacity of the people to determine and direct their own future.

The above principles are grounded on the seven core values of community participation, as formulated by the International Association for Public Participation (International Association for Public Participation, 2002), namely:

- Communities must have a say in matters that affect their lives.
- Community participation includes the promise that the community's contribution will influence the decision.
- The community participation process is a vehicle to communicate interests and needs of all participants.
- The community participation process seeks out and facilitates the engagement of those potentially affected.
- The community participation process must allow people to participate in defining how they will participate.
- The community participation process communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.
- The community participation process provides participants with the information they need in order to participate in a meaningful way Theron, Ceasar, Mchunu & Draai in chapter 5 of Theron and Mchunu 2016:115-123.

Community participation remains difficult to achieve, despite the above international principles and core values. This may be because there are many factors that need to be considered prior to engaging communities in development processes. For example, the social context in which the participation is to take place plays a crucial role as argued by Kotzé & Kotzé (2016:61 – 83). Moreover, besides being time consuming and costly, it is often difficult for different stakeholders with different backgrounds and views to reach consensus during the planning and implementation of development processes. Lastly, the above principles and core values still need to be operationalized with local context; they do not provide the exact actions that should be taken in order to realise them.

### 3.4 Levels of community participation

Having discussed the principles and core values of participation, it is essential to turn to the types participation, presented here as seven typologies of participation. These types of participation are significant for the development processes as the level of participation of community members is a key aspect (Fokane, 2008:45). Below is an outline of the different levels of participation, as put forward by Pretty et al. (1995)

- **Passive participation:** As a one-way form of communication and information flow, participation involves people being briefed by the planners about what has happened already or what is going to happen in future (Kumar, 2002:25). This top-down kind of approach is undemocratic, as participants are not afforded any room to express their views regarding their development; they are just passive recipients of information.
- **Participation in information giving:** Same as the above, this form of participation requires people to evaluate something that has already been done, or that is almost done, without any input. For instance, this may refer to a programme or project that has already been completed, or information pertaining to policies or other issues that affect their lives. Participants are not afforded the space to influence policies or the execution, but are simply given a platform to provide feedback on what has already been done “on their behalf”.
- **Participation by consultation:** Here, participants are consulted for their views on certain issues. This kind of participation leaves a space for officials to amend or adjust plans in accordance with the participants’ responses. However, this does not imply any decision-making power by the participants, and the officials are under no obligation to adopt participants’ views.
- **Participation for material incentives:** People participate by providing their resources and in anticipation of material rewards. Nampila (2005:39) notes that this typology is characteristic of the rural environment where, for instance, farmers provide the fields but participants are not “involved” in the learning process. This means that participation happens because there is an expectation of material reward or incentive.
- **Functional participation:** This type of participation occurs in a group setting in order to achieve the pre-set goals of a programme or project. This type of

participation takes place not in the infancy stage of the programme or project, but key decisions are made prior to participation.

- **Interaction strategies:** This type of participation takes place in a group context, where participation is viewed as a human right and not just a means of obtaining the objectives of the programme or project (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:13).
- **Self-mobilisation strategies:** In this typology, the community mobilises itself to participate in groups without external influence. People determine how resources should be allocated. This is a bottom-up typology that affords people liberty to contact external institutions for technical advice and the resources they need, where necessary. This kind of mobilisation and collective effort is more likely to dispute the imbalanced power and wealth distribution. It is at this level that public participation planning partnerships (P4s) are established between role players (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:13).

The effectiveness of the levels of participation described above depends on the reasons for the participation. Therefore, effective and empowering participation could only be achieved if the best “mix” of strategies has been chosen for a specific context, because every programme or project is different and is therefore likely to face unique challenges and thus to require specific considerations (Theron & Ceasar, 2008:112). Tied to the levels of participation are the modes of participation, which are also an essential aspect of community participation. Oakley and Marsden (in Oakley et al. 1991:6) outline the modes of participation as follows:

- **Anti-participatory mode:** Community participation in this mode occurs voluntarily. The community is not coerced to participate in determining the programme or project content and or results.
- **Manipulation mode:** Participation is high in this mode, with the community partaking in decision-making, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects, as well as in sharing the benefits.
- **Incremental mode:** Here, the purpose of participation is to mobilise efforts to boost control of resources and to control organisations in specific social settings for groups that are excluded from such control.
- **Authentic participation mode:** Communities participate actively in determining the way in which a programme or project is implemented. The goal

of participation is to enhance their livelihoods: personal growth, income, self-reliance and other essentials that they treasure. Within this mode, participants are empowered through their ability to not only influence or direct development, but to actually control and own it, as called for by the Manila Declaration (1989) and the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) core values for participation, as per above.

The above typologies and modes of participation are an important aspect to consider in mapping development processes in the sense that they constitute an important consideration for a sustainable community development process. Development processes ought to be participative and integrative. This means that community members, as beneficiaries of development, should be allowed space to showcase their potential and organisational capacities in order to gather and manage resources to be able to co-produce a sustainable quality of life that best suits their needs and priorities. It therefore stands to reason that development stakeholders, must consider the context in which participation is taking place in order to evaluate strategies and determine the most appropriate typology and mode to apply to a particular community context (Kotzé & Kotzé, 2016: 61-83; Theron & Mchunu, 2014:15). Considering the best combination of participation strategies is crucial if a development programme or project is to benefit the people for whom it is intended.

### **3.5 Community participation: the building blocks of development**

Building blocks of development are directly linked to community participation because they have the potential to influence participation (Nekwaya, 2007:25). For Meyer and Theron (2000:4) as expanded by Theron & Mchunu (2016:17 -20), in any context where the concept of “development” is used it can be interpreted as a so-called “building block”, comprising the following related processes.

### **3.5.1 Community participation as an aspect of human development**

Community participation is a key aspect of human development (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:23). As a basic human need, participation must be a core element of the development process. This implies that people should assume the central role in any development process in order to satisfy their human needs. Therefore, developmental officials have an obligation to ensure that community members partake in decision-making processes with regards to their development (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:50). In addition, community members, as the beneficiaries of the development process, must be empowered in order to effectively contribute to the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Participatory development is defined as a “self-sustaining process” in which development is accelerated by individuals for the betterment of their livelihoods (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:1). Burkey (1993:58) further contends that, “participatory development implies a collective process of self-improvement”. This elevates the importance of people taking responsibility for mobilising each other to achieve their predetermined goals. Mosse (2001), as cited in Theron and Ceasar (2008:105), argues that the chief principle of participatory development is the integration of a community’s knowledge and social capital into programme and project planning. Essentially, participatory development seeks to instil self-reliance in local community beneficiaries. Communities need to drive their own development in order to develop into self-reliant beings (Burkey, 1993:50). In other words, the key purpose of affording communities the opportunity to participate is to capacitate communities to become knowledgeable and skilled enough to be able to identify and solve their own problems (Burkey 1993:50).

### **3.5.2 Social learning**

Following community participation is social learning. The aim of the social learning process is to fulfil the need for “... a flexible, sustained, experimental, action-based, capacity-building style of assistance ...” (Korten, 1990:484). This implies that development stakeholders and institutions must adopt a learning attitude towards community development (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:25). The social learning approach

is important in that it has the potential to ensure that recipients of programmes and projects are actively participating in the development process (ibid). A successful social learning process can then be achieved by ensuring that the programme or project outputs are incorporated and are compatible with community needs and priorities. The decision making process, as well as identification of the needs and grievances of people must also be integrated. In addition, the programme or project's objectives must match the capacity of the organisation (Korten, 1983:213-214, as cited in Theron, 2009:123). There is therefore benefit in taking advantage of the ability of the social learning process to afford beneficiaries a platform on which to express their views and to utilise the design of development programmes and projects, through their IKS's, social capital, as well as local and context-specific knowledge (Theron & Mchunu, 2014:25; Kotzé & Kotzé 2016:61-83).

### **3.5.3 Capacity building**

Capacity building follows after social learning. Capacity building refers to the processes of reinforcing personal and organisational ability to carry out tasks (Meyer & Theron, 2000:18; De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:134). The concept of capacity building is based on the understanding that people have the potential to drive and shape their own change processes through a learning-process approach that is focused on building the capacities of beneficiaries of development to drive their own development (De Beer, 1997:21).

Capacity building provides opportunities for access to information and knowledge, social mobilisation, and material and financial resources, which are important aspects of ensuring that there are benefits accrued from participation in decision-making processes (Mohaneng, 2000:135). If people are to participate fully in their own development, there is a need to ensure accessibility of productive resources (economic and financial) to the people, particularly the poor and marginalised and, once there is access to these, to ensure equitable distribution of those resources (ibid). Essentially, the process of capacity building should therefore take into consideration the economic, cultural and societal differences already existing in communities (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:26).

In order to effectively contribute to building the capacity of communities to participate actively in their own development, NGOs, voluntary organisations, community-based organisations and the private sector involved in capacity building must facilitate and enable and not take over the control of the process of development (De Beer, 1997:22). That is, their participation should be part of a learning process embodied by a flexible, sustainable, experimental and action-based capacity building approach (Korten, 1990:484).

### **3.5.4 Empowerment**

Sustainable development depends on the ability of the beneficiaries to drive and shape the trajectory of their own development. In order to earn the power and confidence to drive this, beneficiaries need to be empowered through information, knowledge and experience. The purpose of empowerment is to expand personal and organisational capacities of beneficiary communities in order to mobilise and deploy resources that would enable them to fulfil their basic needs (Liebenberg & Theron, 1997:124). Empowered participation occurs in two different ways. The first is the need to empower people through skills and abilities (i.e. management and negotiation) so that they are able to function independently. The second is the need to equip people with the skills and knowledge necessary to take action and decisions in the development process (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:52). However, these ways are not an end in themselves. They must be sustained by continual support in order for development to be real for the people.

Empowerment is about possessing decision making powers as a tool for enablement. It is associated with decision making skills, which include knowledge and information to enable people to make wise and informed decisions (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:52). De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:8) describe an empowerment strategy as a process in which development institutions play an enabling role rather than being providers of good things to passive, unquestioning recipients. Thus, empowerment is a collective effort that involves collective sharing of interests and acting together for collective benefit (Swanepoel, 1997, cited in De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:24).



### 3.5.5 Sustainability

The foundation of the building block is sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as the development that provides for the needs of the current generations without depleting the resources for the needs of the future generations (Treurnicht, 2000:63; World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987:43). Human beings are an essential ingredient of the natural environment but they have a responsibility to ensure that their development interventions and activities do not impact negatively on life for future generations (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011:55). In order for livelihoods to be sustainable, there must be “adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs” (WECD, 1987, as cited in Chambers & Conway 1991:5). Sustainable development (SD) is not a destination, but a dynamic process of adaptation, learning and action. It is about recognising, understanding and acting on interconnections, above all those between the economy, the society and the natural environment (Sala, Farioli and Zamagni, 2012: 1-20; United Nations, 2012).

Participation and empowerment are key aspects of sustainable development (Liebenberg & Theron, 1997:126). Building blocks of development (participation, social learning, capacity building and empowerment) are the foundation of sustainable development (Saide, 2006:32). When change agents consider local meaning-giving contexts with regards to development programmes and projects, it is important to recognise the sequence and logical flow of the blocks in their planning.

For purposes of this study, sustainable development is understood to have an element of “a strong, lasting sense of will-power ...” (Chambers & Conway, 1991:5), and a direct link to sustainable livelihoods as it entails maintaining and promoting capabilities for future generations.

## 3.6 Community participation interpreted

### 3.6.1 Participation as a *means*

Rural development practice is characterised by the perception of participation as a *means* to attain development characteristics (Burkey, 1993:58). Oakley and Marsden (1984:23) identify two main ways for realising this notion of participation, namely:

- Community development programmes that are aimed at preparing rural populations to collaborate with development change agents and government to develop plans and programmes; and
- The establishment of formal organisations (cooperatives, farmers' associations, etc.) that provide a structure through which rural communities could have some contact with, and voice in, local development programmes and projects.

In participation as a *means*, local government representatives, for instance, take ownership of programmes and projects and run them from the top-down on behalf of the beneficiaries, which could be attributed to officials adopting a static and passive form of participation, namely, the notion of “masked/false” participation (Dalelo, 2006:38). Within this context, people are mobilised to get things done based on an externally directed, prescribed development goal. This top-down development approach indicates the tendency of especially local government to execute development with or without little participation of the beneficiaries (Roodt, 2001:471) – a welfare kind of service delivery whereby the beneficiaries are often “served” by public institutions whose main objective is the maintenance of a provider/client relationship, and not relationships that are interactive, problem solving and empowering. When this happens, beneficiaries are defined as clients of public institutions, and not as participants in the on-going development process (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993:83). This is typical of a co-opted “involvement”, which shuts down space for initiative and empowerment (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998:21) as covered in 3.4, the levels of community participation.

### **3.6.2 Participation as an *end***

Participation as an *end* is the opposite of participation as a means in that it focuses on enabling participants to assume a greater role in working together towards problem solving. It is a clear indication of authentic and empowering participation (Dalelo, 2006:41). This kind of participation responds to the needs and changing situations of communities, in as much as it presumes the flow of influence or participation from the bottom up (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:337). This type of participation involves being directly implicated in “shaping, deciding and taking part in the development process from the bottom-up” (Dalelo, 2006:41). It therefore is a process of attaining wider personal fulfilment, personal development, awareness and instant satisfaction (Nikkhah

& Redzuan, 2010; Dalelo, 2006). This is because the bottom-up approach allows development beneficiaries to work together with institutions in forming P4s and determining the kind of development that is compatible with their needs and therefore contributes to the execution, monitoring and evaluation of the development process (Roodt, 2001:471).

Community participation as an *end* is an inevitable progression of the process of empowering and reviving the community to participate as full partners in the process of development (Oakley & Marsden, 1984:23). This view of participation as an *end* upholds that development for the benefit of the poor is not feasible unless people are able to manage the process through meaningful participation (Burkey, 1993:58). Meaningful participation is about achieving the power to influence, direct, control and own decision-making processes that affect people's livelihoods (Kumar, 2002:25). As an *end*, participation should be an on-going process whose aim is to develop and reinforce people's abilities so that they are able to directly participate in development programmes and projects (Kumar, 2002:26). The "means" vs. "end" comparative analysis is presented below:

**Table 3.1: Participation as a *Means*, Participation as an *End***

<b>Participation as a <i>means</i></b>	<b>Participation as an <i>end</i></b>
Implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective.	Attempts to empower people to take part in their own development.
Attempts to utilise existing resources in order to achieve the objective of the project or programme.	Ensures the increased role of people in development initiatives.
Common in government programmes and projects, specifically for mobilising communities to improve efficiency of the delivery system.	More favoured by NGOs than by government.
Stresses the achievement of the objective rather than the act of participation itself.	Focuses on improving the ability of the people to participate as local beneficiaries, rather than just achieve predetermined programmes and project objectives.

Participation takes a more passive form, and is non-empowering.	Participation is relatively more active and dynamic, and is empowering.
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**Source:** Kumar (2002:26).

From the above representation, it can be argued that meaningful participation by the rural poor in development is about accessing the necessary resources for development, as well as active engagement and impact on the decisions that concern those resources (Burkey, 2002:59). In this process, proponents of people-centred development (Korten, 1990; Chambers, 1997; Burkey, 1993) argue that the beneficiaries of local development should play a central role in their own development. These principles are also recognised by the Manila Declaration (1989) and IAP2 Core values for community participation as stated in 3.3 above.

### 3.7 Summary

The discussion in this chapter located community participation at the centre of development processes. The discussion foregrounded effective participation as a key element in ensuring that all relevant stakeholders participate in the development process, a process that must be driven by beneficiaries themselves. The chapter advocated for community participation based on the understanding that community development should serve communities, rather than itself.

In addition, community participation was linked to social learning, capacity building, empowerment and sustainability as the key building blocks of development. The central idea behind this was that communities have a right to participate in the decision-making process of the development issues that affect their lives – a process which is largely driven by social learning. This means that community participation should start from the setting of the development agenda in order to ensure that such an agenda captures the interests of communities, and integrates local ways of solving development problems. In other words, the voices in communities must be heard and these communities must experience the effects of their participation in the development process, if community development is to leave a mark on the lives of its intended beneficiaries.

The essence of the above discussion is that, for community participation projects to thrive, community members must be allowed space to actively participate in the design, execution and sustaining of the development activities that impact on their livelihoods. This is a direct reference to the role that development stakeholders have to play, and how they should position themselves in the development process. However, this does not require a hands-off stance from development stakeholders; on the contrary, it suggests that these stakeholders must drive community development in such a way that it facilitates ownership by communities as beneficiaries. The intention here is to ensure that the presence of development stakeholders is not relied upon for every decision and does not lead to disempowering relations. This chapter concedes that community participation is unlikely to take shape where necessary intervention from development stakeholders, such as government, is lacking.

There is therefore a necessity for forward thinking when doing development, in order to ensure that there is clear map of how this development is to be driven. For this purpose, the chapter made a point that solid rural development policies must lead to efficient, affordable and sustainable development. That is, efforts should be made towards encouraging community participation in rural development and this calls for a change of attitudes and approaches, and for the promotion of practices involving affected communities in the planning and implementation of community development projects – within this view, community development requires a deliberate effort to ensure that it is indeed about developing the community.

In order to relate these debates and discussions to the key questions informing this, the next chapter will present the methodological considerations that the researcher deployed when conducting the study – that is, how decisions were made regarding the investigation of key issues. Therefore, the next chapter will outline the methodological and design choices of the study, and provide a rationale for these choices.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters described key issues in the theoretical foundations of the study. This chapter presents the methodological framework through which the study should be understood. The framework includes the research design, location and sampling procedure, research tools, data analysis, limitations of the study, as well as the ethical considerations. This chapter provides justifications for the methodological choices that the researcher has made. Prior to discussing the methodology, it is essential to reiterate that the main objective of this study is to establish and assess the extent of women's participation in rural projects for sustainable livelihoods.

### **4.2 Research methodology**

Research methodology refers to the systematic, theoretical description and analysis of methods, approaches and rules to be employed by a research study (Hart, 1998:28). Research methodology includes the “understanding of how to proceed from the findings of empirical research to make inferences about the truth ... or at least the adequacy...” (Perri & Bellamy, 2012:1).

Although there are two main research traditions, namely qualitative and quantitative research, mixed methods research has also been evolving (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Qualitative research involves studying human behaviour from perspectives of participants in their natural settings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), while quantitative research involves explaining phenomena using numerical representations with a purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena using statistical tools (De Vos, 2002; Creswell, 1994). A central thesis of mixed methods research is that it dismisses the claims of the incompatibility thesis, which presents qualitative and quantitative approaches as philosophical and methodological foes, and holds that it is possible and useful to blend quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single study (Howe, 1988).

This study is located mainly within the qualitative research tradition. However, the fact that a questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used suggests that the study also utilised quantitative research to understand the selected rural development programmes, albeit to a limited degree.

#### **4.2.1 Research orientation of the study**

A qualitative research tradition was adopted for this study due to its potential to generate rich “context- bound” data (Creswell, 2003). Furthermore, the adoption of the qualitative research tradition was based on the underlying belief that human experiences are complex (ibid) and, therefore, need to be read through a multi-dimensional lens rather than a narrow unidimensional focus (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The intention of locating this study in this tradition was to put a lens on the experiences of women participating in selected community development projects in order to attempt not to see one, but rather multiple realities of their experience (Merriam, 1988).

The qualitative research tradition is appropriate when the goal of the study is to obtain a deeper understanding of the experiences of research participants. With qualitative research, the researcher is located in the world of the participants, an experience that is most likely to provide rich and in-depth information (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984:7). The upside of the qualitative approach is its potential to generate the “most meaningful data” because data is generated from those who have first-hand experience, which provides the researcher with an advantage to gain a reasonably “holistic view of what is being studied” (Leedy, 1993:144). In this view, qualitative research is capable of providing a flexible, exploratory and discovery orientation to phenomena.

In order to take advantage of the benefits of the qualitative research tradition, various qualitatively-oriented research methods were used to elicit data from selected participants and respondents. These are elaborated upon in the sections that follow.

#### **4.2.2 Sampling procedure**

Sampling involves the selection of participants or respondents for a particular study with the purpose of collecting data in order to respond to that study’s key research questions (De Vaus, 1996:52). Sampling is about deciding on a unit of analysis, a “perfect sample” that reasonably represents the target population (Singleton, et al.,

1988:136). Sampling can be differentiated into probability and non-probability sampling (Durrheim and Painter, 2006: 132-139). Probability sampling was used in this study, whereby two rural community development projects, the *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project* and *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project* were selected. The intention was to explore the experiences of women participating in the two community development projects for the sustainable livelihoods of their households.

#### **4.2.3 Population characteristics**

The two community development projects that were identified for the study both comprised a membership of women only. The women were of different ages, as membership was open to all women in the village. Participation in these groups was voluntary. Participants acknowledged that most were single parents that had been widowed, divorced or never married. In addition, these women were most often head and breadwinners of their families, and had been pushed by socio-economic circumstances that prevailed after incidence of political violence that led to undesirable consequences in their lives (including displacement and death of family members in some households).

#### **4.2.4 Access to participants**

To put the participants at ease and create rapport, initial contact was made with leaders of the two community development projects in order to explain and discuss the purpose of the study.

The leaders of the groups then introduced the researcher to the members of their respective groups in order for them to meet the researcher and ask questions about the study. The researcher decided to make the initial contacts herself, based on the understanding and belief that building research relationships begins the moment potential participants hear about the study (Seidman, 1998:37). During these meetings, the researcher informed the participants that their participation in the study was voluntary, and assured them of the confidentiality of their responses, should they consent to participate. Once the participants had agreed, the researcher requested them to sign forms of informed consent. This is a necessary step before the commencement of a study (Strydom & Delport, 2005:38).



Gaining entry to the participants was relatively effortless because the two projects were open access community projects. Open access community projects are projects without bureaucratic barriers that are likely to complicate access to participants. So, the selected community development projects met one of the important criteria that the researchers had set for the case studies, that of relatively easy access.

#### **4.2.5 Piloting research instruments**

A pilot study is a prerequisite mini-study that a researcher conducts in order to familiarise themselves with, and make informed adaptations to the design of the study under investigation (De Vos, 2002:205). Part of the rationale for the piloting of the instruments was to enhance their reliability when used in the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 260). The researcher piloted the research instruments in the neighbouring, adjacent community of Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal province. The main reason for selecting these individuals to pilot the instruments was their proximity to the researcher's residential area. These were individuals who were not part of the study. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to test the appropriateness of the questions in order to detect ambiguities and controversies.

After a discussion with the individuals on their experiences during the pilot exercise, recommendations were made and the researcher adjusted and prepared instruments accordingly for collecting data where the study was to be conducted.

#### **4.2.6 Research methods**

##### **4.2.6.1 *Focus groups***

Focus groups involve the explicit use of group interaction to generate data on perceptions, insights and attitudes that would have otherwise been difficult to access without this interaction (Morgan, 1988). Focus group interviews are not discussions; they are interviews that are focused on a specific topic or theme (Krueger & Casey, 2000:120). A focus group is typically composed of a relatively homogenous group of participants, who are asked to reflect on particular areas of their experience, and to express their perceptions, views and insights in the presence of other group members (Patton, 1987). In other words, unlike in individual interviews, focus group interviews allow participants to hear each other's responses and to make additional points on these (ibid). The strength of a focus group interview lies in its potential to generate high

quality data in a social context where participants are able to consider their own views as part of and in the context of the views of their focus group members (Patton, 1987). A researcher plays a critical role during a focus group interview, namely that of conducting a carefully planned, focused discussion; creating a desirable atmosphere that encourages free expression of different points of view without fear of being persecuted; and encouraging participants to listen to and respond to one another's ideas, perceptions and insights (Krueger, 1994).

Denscombe (2007:116) recommends a group size of between six and nine participants for each focus group interview session, but points out that more can be included depending on the context of the research. The researcher in this study made a decision that the projects would be divided into groups of not more than ten per session, depending on the number of members for each project. *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project* had twenty-six (26) members, and was divided into two groups of nine participants and one group of eight (8) participants. *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project* had a membership of twelve (12), and the group was divided into two groups of six participants. All in all, the researcher conducted five (5) focus group interview sessions with the groups of participants.

The five (5) focus group interview sessions were conducted between the months of August and September 2015. In order to try create an atmosphere where participants were able to talk freely about their experiences, the researcher decided to conduct interviewing sessions at the project sites. This was also useful in that it provided the researcher with the opportunity to refer specifically to some of their work and products, and to probe their daily experiences in the projects.

During the sessions, participants were invited to respond in the language with which they were most comfortable, which was mostly isiZulu, the dominant language in the province. The decision to allow them language preference was based on the researcher's assumption that women who participate in such projects are often those who could not complete their education and, therefore, using English could disadvantage them and restrict their expression, responses and inputs. Initially, participants were reluctant to freely express their views in the presence of others, particularly where questions involved issues they considered to constitute sensitive information. However, as the

focus group discussion sessions progressed, they became more and more comfortable, and began to provide rich insights into the workings of their projects and their experiences thereof.

Prior to the discussions the researcher requested permission to tape-record the session, which was granted. In addition to tape-recording, the researcher also took notes where necessary, particularly on the issues that were not possible to capture with the use of the recorder. Each session lasted for at least an hour but some were a bit longer, largely due to the participants' willingness to contribute. However, this was also sometimes due to points of view being repeated, although mainly in a rephrased form.

#### **4.2.6.2 *In-depth semi-structured interviews with development stakeholders***

As mentioned earlier, the role of development stakeholders and their organisations is to facilitate and encourage community development projects. As such, having development stakeholders as participants in this study was necessary in order to establish the extent of their participation in, and impact on, the selected community development projects. The purpose of the interviews was to dig into and access their perceptions, understandings and experiences regarding their roles in community development projects (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984:67).

The choice of interviews as a method for generating data was based on the assumption that the perspectives, understandings and experiences of development stakeholders about their roles in community development projects constituted an integral part of the extent of their significance in the selected community development projects. Interviews, therefore, had the potential to provide an opportunity for the development stakeholders to provide a meaningful and purposeful expression of their perceptions, understandings and experiences of their roles in the selected community development projects (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:7).

Semi-structured interviews are generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions and, therefore, allow other questions to emerge from the dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 314-321). In other words, semi-structured interviews have the potential to allow the

interviewer or researcher to delve deeply into the experiences, perceptions and views of participants. However, it is important to note that the very discourse of interviewing allows a situation wherein the researcher takes the lead and controls the process (Henning, 2004). Therefore, according to Henning (2004: 52-53), interviews are not free, naturally occurring conversations between partners; interviews are instead contrived social interactions (ibid). The prefix semi- in semi-structured interviews indicates that, although the interviewee has some control, the ownership of the interview is primarily the privilege of the interviewer (ibid). Based on this understanding, the researcher endeavoured to relinquish some of her power and invited participants to co-direct the process of the interviews. This was done by, for instance, ensuring that some of the researcher's questions were open-ended and that the participants had a measure of freedom to speak in their own terms.

The choice of the semi-structured interview was also based on the supposition that semi-structured interviews would provide an opportunity for the researcher to discard questions that were found to be ambiguous and ineffective in eliciting the necessary information and to replace them with new, and add missing, ones (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 316). This meant that, if new information was offered that was not initially reflected in the interview guide, the researcher was able to follow up with additional prompts and pursue new issues and aspects as they emerged. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were used because they were, despite their limitations, believed to have potential to provide the researcher with an opportunity to investigate varieties of perceptions and understandings of the participants with regards to their roles in community development projects using different angles (Kvale, 2006: 480 - 500).

The researcher conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with selected key development stakeholders, which included the ward councillor, local economic development manager, community development worker and the food security coordinator. The intention of interviewing these key development stakeholders was to understand the roles of development stakeholders in community development projects, and how they dealt with issues, including access issues in relation to women from rural areas in their roles as key development role players. The key informants were from different development organisations and institutions, namely, local municipality, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Department of Social Development. Informants from these organisations were targeted

because of their direct participation in community development projects that were improving livelihoods of ordinary people, especially people from communities in socio-economically deprived contexts.

The interviews were conducted with the help of an interview guide or schedule. This was a schedule of questions prepared before the interviews with the participants took place. The importance of the interview guide lay in that it set out a list of things for the researcher to be sure to ask about (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

The participants were interviewed one by one on different days in order to provide the researcher with time to reflect on what had emerged from each interview, and make necessary adaptations where necessary. A period of about 30 to 60 minutes was allocated per participant, and participants were allowed to respond in the language with which they were most comfortable. The reason for this was to ensure, as far as possible, that participants did not have to struggle with language in the sharing of their subjective experiences. The participants preferred a mixture of English and isiZulu, although English seemed to take up a greater portion of their responses. All interviews were audiotaped (with the participants' permission) and transcribed verbatim.

#### **4.2.6.3 Self-administered questionnaire**

Questionnaires are a common method of eliciting respondents' perceptions and attitudes about a particular subject (Babbie, 2007: 257-264). The structured questionnaire was used with specific questions to which respondents responded. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions, in which respondents were requested to choose the most appropriate response from a list provided by the researcher (ibid). The rationale for using closed-ended questions lay in the assumption that these have the potential to provide "a greater uniformity of responses", which are easier to process than open-ended questions (Babbie, 2007:246). However, a major shortcoming of a structured, closed-ended questionnaire lies in the possibility that a researcher "might omit certain issues that respondents would have said were important" (Babbie, 2007:247). In order to mitigate the impact of this possible shortcoming, the researcher endeavoured to include all the possible categories. An "Other (Please specify....)" category was also included, in order to allow participants to express their views on what was excluded.

The respondents who completed the questionnaire were purposively drawn from White City and Esibhananeni, the two sub-villages in Maqongqo. These individuals were above eighteen years of age and at the time not participating in any community development project. The purpose of administering the questionnaire to these respondents was, amongst other things, to establish the reasons for why they were not participating in community development projects.

Sixty (60) questionnaires were distributed randomly to the community members from White City and Esibhananeni, Maqongqo. Fifty-two out of sixty questionnaires (87 per cent) were completed and returned.

#### **4.2.6.4 Document analysis**

In addition to the primary data, secondary data was collected from relevant materials, such project documents (that were available and which the participants were willing to share), organisational reports, as well as journal articles. The materials surveyed, were materials from The Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute (ARDRI), the Food Organization Agency (FOA), and Department of Land Affairs. The process entailed actively gathering information and making use of the work by examining the archives as well as libraries. The approach assisted the researcher to obtain and be exposed to multiple perspectives and realities of the experiences of rural women participating in development projects (Yin, 1993:61).

### **4.3 Data analysis**

It is almost impossible to specify the exact time at which data analysis commenced for the study. This is partly because the process of analysing data ran largely in concurrence with the data-collection process. Data analysis involved the process of making meaning of the collected data, i.e. making sense of the observations, words and/or representations' (De Vos, 1998: 63). Prior to the analysis of the gathered information, the researcher went through the data in order to familiarise herself with the collected data. This process entailed immersing herself in it, identifying emerging themes and patterns, coding, elaborating on, and describing and interpreting situations (Babbie, 2007: 378-403).

The content analysis approach was used to analyse the collected data. This approach made it possible for the researcher to examine transcriptions of recorded information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:56). Content analysis of data has to do with making sense of textual qualitative materials with the intention of constructing and/or supporting a particular line of argument (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:23; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992: 313 - 321). Content analysis focused on the characteristics of language as communication, with a particular interest in the content or contextual meaning of the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1277 - 1288; McTavish & Pirro, 1990: 245 - 265). In the context of the current study, text data included verbal and print data from semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents that the participants were willing to share with the researcher.

Content analysis may be conceptual or relational. The researcher employed conceptual content analysis, also known as thematic analysis. The researcher began the process of analysis by repeatedly reading all collected data with the intention of obtaining a sense of the whole data set (Tesch, 1990). Thereafter, the text was read word for word in order to identify emerging themes and patterns with regards to participation of women in community development projects; reasons for why some individual and/or sections of the community were at the time not participating in community development projects; and the roles of development stakeholders in community development projects in order to generate codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 55-72). This was achieved by first focusing on the direct words from the text that appeared to capture key thoughts, concepts and meanings. The researcher approached the text by taking notes of her first impressions, thoughts, and initial analysis. As this process continued, the researcher created labels for codes that emerged, and that were reflective of more than one key thought. These often came directly from the text and were then used as the initial coding frame. The identified codes were then classified into specific categories, depending on how they were related and linked. Emerging categories were used to organise and classify the codes into clusters of meaning (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 33-44). Next, depending on the relationships between subcategories, the researcher grouped subcategories into fewer thematic categories. The researcher then developed definitions for each category, subcategory, and code. In order to prepare for the description and discussion of findings, the researcher identified exemplars for each code and category from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1279).

Data from the self-administered questionnaire was quantitatively analysed, involving the numerical representation and manipulation of responses with the intention of describing and explaining the phenomena that those responses represented (Babbie, 2007: 405). A statistician assisted the researcher with the running of the analysis. The descriptions and explanations of the responses are provided in the next chapter.

#### **4.4 Research limitations and challenges**

Challenges constitute an inevitable part of every research project, no matter how meticulously it has been planned. This research study was no exception to the rule. For instance, distributing and collecting questionnaires was a time-consuming exercise, which required going from door to door, and keeping an accurate record of where the questionnaire had been distributed.

Secondly, obtaining permission from gatekeepers, such as the village head, in order to distribute the questionnaire also posed a challenge because the village head was concerned that previously people had come and promised development aid, and then had never returned to fulfil their promises. His view was that, as a community, they had had enough of people coming to their village to raise false promises, and leave their people in despair. However, with persistent entreating, the village head eventually responded in the affirmative.

Lastly, finding time in the busy schedule of key development stakeholders was a huge challenge. Appointments were often postponed and/or cancelled, with no definite time provided for the postponed appointment and the researcher had to waste resources on fruitless trips, which did not yield any results towards the objectives of the study. In addition, this extended the time the researcher had allocated for data collection to overlap dangerously with time allocated for other research activities. This had negative consequences for the deadline that the researcher had set aside for the submission of the dissertation.



## **4.5 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations should be part of all research. The reason for being ethical lies in the importance of ensuring that the participants' rights and interests are always protected. As a result, the following measures and considerations were made in order to ensure reasonable protection of the participants in the research study.

Prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher met with the participants with the purpose of explaining the intention and focus of the study. Thereafter, potential participants were requested to participate in the research project and informed consent was obtained from those who were willing to be included (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2009:56). After giving verbal consent for participation, participants were requested to sign a consent form as evidence that they had consented. The researcher re-assured the participants that their contributions were voluntary and that they were at liberty to disengage from the study at any stage without any negative consequences.

Interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of participants and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed data was then verified with the participants through a process known as member checking (Guba, 1981: 85). The individual identifying information relating to participants, including their responses, was treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Such confidentiality and anonymity was ensured through the use of pseudonyms. In addition, any material relating to participants was kept under lock and key in order to ensure that it remained confidential.

## **4.6 Summary**

From the above, it is clear that the choices researchers make about methodological and design issues are often informed by their ideological convictions. These choices are therefore charged by their very nature, rather than neutral and objective. They are a product of the convictions, beliefs and assumptions of the researcher.

The ideological stance adopted by a researcher often informs decisions relating to design issues of the study. This means that the ideological assumptions can lead to particular choices about how the key research questions are to be investigated, how data is to be generated, and how findings are to be understood. This, therefore, suggests that

researchers need to consider their epistemological and ontological positions as a critical part of the trajectory of their study, and how these give rise to particular understandings while silencing others.

Linked to the above, the choice of which methods to use for data generation has its source in the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the researcher. However, this is not a clean, linear process but rather a messy process that requires careful weighing of options, as whatever data generation methods is deployed has its ups and downs, weaknesses and strengths, which need to be considered as these have a direct bearing on what eventually emerges as findings.

This chapter provided a map of how these issues were navigated and negotiated in this study within the context of opportunities and constraints provided by the choices that were being made. Following this, the next chapter presents the findings that emerged as a result of the particular methodological and design choices and tries to make sense of the findings in line with the study's key research questions, while being guided by the epistemological and ontological orientations. In addition, the theoretical understandings from chapters 2 and 3 are deployed when trying to make sense of the findings.

## CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented methodological considerations of the study. This chapter presents data and findings gathered through the various data-collecting methods that were described. It is important at this point to reiterate that the objectives of the study were to explore the experiences of women from rural areas who were participating in selected community development projects for sustainable livelihoods; reasons for why some individuals and/or sections of the community were not participating; and the role of development stakeholders in community development projects. Therefore, the data and findings presented in this chapter are in line with the objectives and key research questions of the study.

### 5.2 Profiling of the participants

Maqongqo Village is made up of two sub-villages, namely, Esibhananeni and White City. The majority of people in Esibhananeni and White City are black African, 1 303 (99.8 per cent) and 1 409 (99.9 per cent) households respectively, with a negligible percentage of Indian/Asian and Coloured (i.e. Asian: 1; Coloured: 1 and Asian: 0; Coloured: 1, respectively). There are no white people in Esibhananeni and White City. Moreover, 1 270 (97.4 per cent) households in Esibhananeni and 1 388 (98.4 per cent) households in White City are isiZulu speakers. Of the households in Esibhananeni and White City, there are more female-headed than male-headed households. Of the households in these areas, 110 (43 per cent) in Esibhananeni are male headed, while 146 (57 per cent) households are female headed. In White City, 107 (43 per cent) households are male headed, while 142 (57 per cent) are female headed (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Below are tables showing the number of households by race and language in Maqongqo Village.

**Table 5.1: Household by Race**

Sub-Village	Black African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total Excl. Other
Esibhananeni	1303	1	1	-	1305
White City	1409	1	-	-	1410

**Source:** Statistics South Africa (2011).

**Table 5.2: Household by Language**

Sub-Village	Afrikaans	English	IsiNdebele	IsiXhosa	IsiZulu	Sepedi	Sesotho	Setswana	Sign	SiSwati	Tshivenda	Xitsonga
Esibhananeni	2	10	2	8	1270	1	6	1	1	1	-	2
White City	2	9	6	-	1388	-	-	5	-	-	-	-

**Source:** Statistics South Africa (2011).

### 5.3 Educational levels of participants

Education is a critical element for the socio-economic status of any community. There is evidence that variables such as employment are dependent on level of education. As a basic right, education is often a way of achieving development and progress in the lives of people. It is generally accepted that the level of education of any particular society determines how that society views and participates in development. From the researcher's personal analysis, the literacy level of the people in the Maqongqo Village is low, evidenced in some cases by the participants in this study indicating that they did not know anything about sustainable livelihoods as a concept that affected their lives. For them, the projects they are engaged in are solely for subsistence purposes and nothing more. These aspects will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Some of the participants pointed out that the reason why they participated in development projects was because they did not have access to formal employment due to lack of opportunity to receive education. Those who indicated they had attended some form of schooling had received up to secondary school level, and admitted that they did not do well in school because of the socio-cultural constraints that they experienced in their lives. Some had only gone up to the primary level of education, with one participant reporting that girls were not encouraged to obtain education when she was young because it was believed that a girl would get married and be taken care of by their husband. This participant added that another reason why girls were not prioritised for education, was that it was “of no benefit to a girl’s family to educate a girl”, but that “it will benefit the family into which family the girl will marry”. As a result, most families at that time preferred to send boys to school in order not to “waste money on sending girls to school”. For the majority of families in those days, the most important things were to “prepare a girl for marriage by training her in household chores”.

However, participants who confirmed that this had happened to them – that they had been denied the opportunity to pursue education – were now heads of their families. In other words, they had not married as had been assumed and had to resort to self-help community projects in order for them to put food on the table for their families. These women participated in these projects “...in order to supplement the meagre social grant from South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)...”, a service provider appointed by the Department of Social Development to manage the operation of the social grant system.

The issue of having to “supplement the meagre social grant” points to the discrepancy between the needs of the participants and the amount of the social grant. The possibility of increasing the social security services to meet the needs of the participants is next to zero, given the country’s revenue base. Therefore, participation in community development projects may be a better option for assisting women to meet their basic needs.

In order to improve resilience for the participants, especially in line with the projects in which they were participating, some kind of vocational training would be helpful to

grow and expand the projects for the benefit of their families and the community in general (Good Governance Learning Network, 2014). The importance of vocational training is that it has the potential to equip these small-scale entrepreneurs with new and innovative techniques, as well as the important aspects of business management and diversification of services and products in order to grow their business in line with the market share considerations.

#### 5.4 Employment trends in the research area

In line with low levels of education, the rate of unemployment in the study area was generally high (55 per cent), with more unemployed females (54 per cent) than males (46 per cent). As shown in Table 5.3 below, the number of people who were not economically active in the area was also high (371 males and 515 females). In addition, there were more discouraged female (63 per cent) than male (37 per cent) work-seekers. These aspects, combined with low levels of education, often contribute to high levels of poverty and despair. Given the fact that more women than men served as heads of households and breadwinners, the situation reveals the possible challenges facing women in the area in their responsibilities to fend for and improve the quality life for their families for sustainable livelihoods.

**Table 5.3: Employment Status by Sex**

	Employed		Unemployed		Discouraged work-seeker		Other not economically active	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Esibhananeni	77	63	73	77	13	27	226	288
White City	93	95	113	141	9	11	145	227

**Source:** Statistics South Africa (2011).

## 5.5 Focus group discussions with key informants

### 5.5.1 Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project

*Isibindi Samakhosikazi* is the name of one of the community development projects that was observed by the researcher for purposes of this study. The name “*Isibindi Samakhosikazi*” means “courage or bravery of women”. The name originated from the fact that participants felt that starting a project such as theirs was a symbol of resilience, given the constraining factors women were experiencing in the village. Participants also reported that the name served to energise them whenever the challenges were such that closing shop seemed the only option. That is, it reminded them that there could be no space for cowardice when it came to the welfare of their families.

*Isibindi Samakhosikazi* is a group of women participating in a garment-sewing project for the sustainable livelihoods of their families. Most of the members of this group reported that they were widows and that their livelihoods depended on the project as their main source of income. They therefore felt that “failure was not an option for our project ... if it collapses, that would mean hunger for us and our families”. For the participants in this project, there was only one direction, and that was “forwards and never backwards”.

#### 5.5.1.1 *Project development and management: Lapses of accountability*

Before embarking on the sewing project, the participants were previously part of a project that was trying to address the challenges that people with disabilities were experiencing in the community. This was in 2000. Participants reported that the challenge facing disabled people in the area was lack of access to education. Many of the disabled children in the area “were kept at home, and denied the opportunity to be with other children ... and this was painful to watch every day of our lives”. As a result, they had to ensure that their disabled family members could at least benefit from Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) classes, which they introduced themselves without any external support. However, the project did not last as it was affected by the municipal demarcations, which left them with no sponsor when Maqongqo Village was moved to Umgungundlovu District Municipality.

After this project had collapsed the participants introduced a sewing project in 2009. They started the project by “pulling together what we had that was required in the project, which was mainly small and old sewing machines”. The decision was that the project would specialise in school uniforms, mainly shirts, skirts and dresses.

Although the project has not collapsed, participants reported, “it had not expanded in terms of scale or diversified after six years of operation ... because we have ideas but we do not have money and capacity to see them through”. The members of the project reported that they were still largely living from hand to mouth, and “although we have a banking account, there is very little that was going into the bank as profit”. The participants reported that they could not expand their project largely because “we do not have the means or skills and knowledge to do so, as there is no support” from development stakeholders. For example, they receive no support from relevant groups such as NGOs, the Department of Social Development, as well as the Department of Women Affairs. The extent of lack of support was such that at some point participants had even lost hope that the project had any future. For instance, some of the participants confirmed that, at some point “our project was sinking and dying ... we were worried”. Fortunately, as a desperate measure the chairperson of the group single-handedly (with no support from relevant development stakeholders) drafted a letter to the Minister of Social Development who responded positively by providing finances to purchase bigger, modern sewing machines and other equipment. Even after the intervention by the Minister, participants reported that there was no technical “support provided” by the local development stakeholders in order to assist them with growing the project. That the project was still alive was a miracle, as “we had not had any support in the form of business and project management training”.

The above scenario points to the reality faced by some communities who have taken the initiative to start something to help improve their situation but where development stakeholders have, for some reason, not yet come to the party. The focus on rural development as an escape route from poverty and underdevelopment is severely undermined by the absence of technical support. Such absence has the potential to deny communities the power to shape and drive their own development.



### **5.5.1.2 Membership: Who is in, who is out?**

Upon asking participants what their eligibility criteria for membership were, and how they recruited members to their group, the participants indicated that “membership is open to anyone who was willing to join”, and that there were no strict rules about who was eligible or not. The participants were, however, specific that they were targeting “women who are younger than us”, given that fact that “all the members in the group are above forty-five years”; except for one who was a twenty-eight-year-old woman. Their preference for younger women was based on their wish to transfer skills to the younger generation to ensure that women who were from similar socio-economic contexts in the area were in a better position to “sustain their families through participation in community projects, especially given the poor levels of education and employment” in the study area. They reported that they had, however, not been successful in this area because “the youth are not really interested in such community projects, yet they are the leaders of tomorrow who are supposed to be economically active members of their society”.

The participants advanced a variety of reasons for what they believed to be the cause of youth apathy when it comes to participating in community development projects. Firstly, although unemployment was rife in the area, the fact that the members of *Isibindi Samakhosikazi* were themselves living from hand to mouth deterred youth from participating in the project, given the current exorbitant youth lifestyles. Secondly, for young people who were unemployed but had better education, it was difficult for them to “join a project with a membership of people who have failed in education, as that would stigmatise them ... particularly because the project was not seen to be supported by educated people from government”. Lastly, the legacy of apartheid, which “discouraged different forms of self-help projects amongst black African communities”, was still alive. A culture of dependence was entrenched in the community, with “people waiting to be provided for”. Although many young people could not provide for their basic needs, they seemed to believe that “something will fall from the sky” or that “their situation would change without them having done anything to change it”. Such a situation may have been caused by a combination of many variables including hopelessness, lack of role models, and a breakdown of initiative.

### **5.5.1.3 Sustainability: “We are positive about the future”**

Although participants understood that the project had to be sustained, such an understanding was not related to the principles underpinning sustainable development. For instance, they did not view the project as part of a development agenda; for them the project had to be done in order to have food on the table, and not in order to improve the quality of life in the community. However, what they were sure of was that the project was contributing immensely towards their livelihoods. They mentioned, “We have grandchildren for whom we make uniforms instead of having to buy from retailers”. The purpose of the project, rather than being understood as profit making, was understood by participants as a “way of giving back to our community”. One participant put it the following way:

“When we attend war rooms, they give us information of needy children in the community and we give them school uniforms for free”. Giving back to the community is noble, but it has to be informed by how much profit the business is able to make. That is, social corporate responsibility as a business strategy. In order for companies to engage in it without hurting their revenue stream, they need to understand what their core social purpose is and how that aligns with their strategic direction. Although businesses get involved with charity, they are not charity organisations. Businesses prioritise making profit.

On the other hand, it could be argued that participants understood the challenges facing the community very well and that, although they felt they were not receiving much support from the relevant development stakeholders specifically on their project work, they were receiving important insights from organised poverty alleviation programmes. What is also profound is that these were women who were living from hand to mouth but who were able to, despite their difficult circumstances, take care of those that were worse off than them. This resonates well with the saying that if you empower a woman, you have empowered the whole village. Therefore, if this kind of woman is provided with opportunities to be empowered, there might surely be a chance for a better life for all in their communities. The participants were quite emphatic that since they started participating in the garment-sewing project, “our lives have improved in many ways, over and above the fact that we don’t go to bed with empty stomachs anymore. We are positive about the future, despite the challenges that we are experiencing”. So, the fact

that this project was able to “give back to the community” from what it was making without support from development stakeholders is an indication of the growth potential that the project had.

#### **5.5.1.4 Partnerships: “It is what kept us alive”**

The idea of partnerships has long been aligned with success. When asked whether their garment-sewing project was in partnership with any relevant organisations, one of the respondents said:

“We are working with Department of Social Development. We are engaging other private organisations but for now our challenge is that our bookkeeping is not of acceptable standard by these organisations”.

The women acknowledged that in 2011 the Department of Social Development funded them the money that they used to purchase bigger sewing machines as mentioned earlier. They also appreciated the fact that the same Department had given them opportunities to attend different workshops and training to enhance their knowledge and skills in garment sewing. So, although they felt they were not sufficiently supported by the relevant development stakeholders, they were actually not completely left without support. It would seem that the role the Department of Social Development had played in assisting the survival of the project had come at a crucial point, as participants felt that “our partnership with them is what has kept us afloat”.

The above indicates the importance of dedicated support to community development projects, particularly in contexts where communities or categories of people (for example, women in rural areas) were previously deprived of opportunities to actively participate in efforts to improve the quality of their lives. It also indicates that, even though communities have to drive community development projects, they cannot do this alone: there is a need to build the capacity of communities to participate actively in the programmes and projects that improve the quality of life in communities. Therefore, there is a place and role for development stakeholders in order to ensure that community development projects reach their growth potential.

### **5.5.1.5 *The socio-economic context: “A force that is pulling our community down”***

When asked about the composition of their households, participants reported that they were mostly single women who had to assume the role of heads of their families, which they believed “is what men are supposed to be doing”. This implies that all the important decisions on the running of their households had to be taken and carried out by them. Besides being involved in the sewing project, some of the participants were also participating in other community work programmes, such as the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). However, the rest of the participants depended solely on the garment-sewing project.

Although it could be argued that these women were some of the most resilient in the village, they reported that socio-economic issues, which had an adverse effect on their project and their households, also affected them. For instance, some of the participants revealed that “we have lost our children to the HIV pandemic”, and that they were now left with the difficult task of looking after their grandchildren whose parents have died. They also mentioned the challenge of teenage pregnancies and early marriages that was prevalent in their community and which resulted in many young girls dropping out of school at a young age. The participants felt that this was contributing significantly to the “forces that are pulling our community down”, and that it was in fact “sustaining and worsening the prevalence of low levels of education and high levels of unemployment and poverty”.

### **5.5.1.6 *Improving livelihoods: “Standing up for ourselves”***

Participants underlined the importance of people doing something for a living, standing up for themselves and doing something to improve the quality of their lives. They felt that, although asking for help was important it did not help much to “always approach government for intervention in our lives”, and that instead individuals had to stand up for themselves and participate in community development initiatives, and therefore participate in changing their situations. In closing, one participant had this to say, “We wish to be joined by some youths who will learn from us and also bring fresh young minds that can take this project to the next level”.

### **5.5.1.7 Challenges in doing community development**

As part of their achievement, participants expressed pride that their group was well-known in their area, as this helped increase their customer base, as the community members are beneficiaries of this particular project. For instance, parents buy uniforms for their children from *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project*. However, participants pointed to numerous challenges that they faced on a daily basis, and the impact these had on the success of their project. For instance, initially the participants did not have their own place for the business and had to share the building with other businesses. This meant, “The space we were using for our project was very small”. The major problem this caused was regarding the electricity bill that had to be shared with other organisations in the same premises. This always led to “disagreements when the bill had to be settled because there was only one meter” and it was difficult share payment equitably. In addition, the condition of the facility had deteriorated severely, and was beginning to cause problems for their work. Security at the facility was also another concern; there was no security arrangement in place, as other organisations with which they were sharing the facility did not have expensive equipment that required security services.

Participants expressed despair and confirmed that “we would accept any kind of assistance from anyone” with regards to the facility. However, on the other hand, they reported that they could see the light at the end of the tunnel, as they believed that “patience, commitment and love for our project” was what kept them going. Another strong point that they reported was that “we respect each other and make our own decisions as a team, and constantly remind each other to respect our project-related equipment and to refrain from using it for personal interests or individual benefit”.

During conversation, the participants pointed out, “We would go out of our way to sustain our families”. Therefore, their plea for the youth to join them could indicate their willingness to create opportunities for the young to learn different skills for the benefit of their communities and to deal with succession issues in order to ensure the sustainability of their project.

## 5.5.2 Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project

*Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project* is the name of the second community development project that was studied. The name “*Iminyezane*” means “willow trees”. Willow trees are found primarily on moist soils in cold and temperate regions. Some willows are low-growing or creeping. Participants felt that the quality of willows to thrive in cold regions and to be flexible and unshakeable, making it difficult for winds to break it, resembled their qualities as an organisation. The qualities of this tree, said the Chairperson, “resembles who we are as a project ... the qualities of our project”. Participants alluded to the fact that they viewed themselves as resembling a willow tree, and that this is what “kept us going, knowing that nothing can stop us”. At the time of the study, *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project* had a membership of twenty-six women.

### 5.5.2.1 *Project development and management: “A need to help ourselves”*

Prior to this project, participants participated in a sponsored candle-making project. This was around 1995. Upon realising that the market for candles was no longer viable, since electricity was now available in the area, and that the life of their business was nearing an end, they came up with an idea of establishing a gardening project instead. The project was established following the participants’ plea to the then *induna* (a tribal councillor or headman) to “provide us with a piece of land for our project”. The participants indicated that their husbands “had died from violence ... our children were suffering ... we do not have access to basic needs”. Therefore, part of the reason for the introduction of the project was to replace the income that would have come from their husbands who had been killed during political violence in the area.

Probing them on how their project was performing, participants told the researcher that they had been able to “survive on our own because it is what we want to do”. They reported that they sold their produce to the community, which saved them time and money they would have spent transporting their produce to the vegetable market in town. Their families and community thus benefitted from this gardening project. However, the fact is that, by not taking advantage of the market in town, they might

have been missing out on a bigger market for their produce, particularly coming from an area with high unemployment.

Participants attributed the success of their project to the “love, passion and commitment we have for our project”, despite experiencing challenges with people and organisations who had promised them financial assistance, but had since failed to deliver.

### **5.5.2.2 Membership: Who is in, who is out?**

When participants were asked about their membership and how they recruited members, they indicated that they had a chairperson, who had been in that position since the inception of the project, a treasurer and a secretary. They indicated that their membership was open to everyone but were concerned that members who joined were mostly the elderly “because our youth hates the soil”. They also pointed out that the project normally attracted widows and unmarried women who had children to support. Amongst the participants were older women, above seventy years of age.

It would seem that the issue of attracting youth to community development projects, as with *Isibindi Samakhosikazi*, remains a challenge. The participants felt that “this is a critical area of community development, particularly given the fact that the youth in question is no longer in schools, unemployed and not in further education, and there is therefore a risk that if they are not part of the solution, they may be part of the problems that we are facing as a community”.

### **5.5.2.3 Partnerships in community development**

When asked about who and which organisations they had partnered with, participants said that they worked in partnership with Umkhambathini Local Municipality and the Department of Agriculture in Cedara. Amongst the many forms of assistance they had received from these organisations were materials and implements such as seeds, watering cans, hoes and forks. They indicated that they were still waiting for the “Municipality representatives, who had promised to come and see our project in July in order to see how they can help us”, to honour their promise. By the time the researcher held interviews with the participants in August, the representatives had still

not delivered on this promise. The tendency of some officials to not honour their promises to communities is a challenge that both projects have faced.

#### **5.5.2.4 *The meaning of development: “We hate receiving food parcels”***

When participants were asked about the sustainability of their project, it was clear that they had not thought about how the project would be kept going. Participants were adamant that:

“The project is our source of livelihood ...the project is helping a lot, we sell to our community, we feed our families and we don’t have to go to the shop all the time. It is making a huge difference in our families’ lives because we can even buy school uniforms and shoes for our grandchildren”.

The participants’ assessment of what impact participating in the project had on their lives was that it had improved their quality of life, and that “there is a significant difference in our family lives because we no longer have to wait for social welfare to provide us with social grants ... we hate receiving food parcels because they take away your dignity as a person ... although they are free, they are not really free of charge; you pay with your dignity”. This position underlines the importance of empowering people and building their capacity to provide for themselves and exercise control over their own lives. It would seem that for some ordinary people, what they want is not to receive handouts, but to have the capacity to provide for themselves.

Therefore, being unable to provide for oneself is tantamount to failing in one’s most basic duties and is a matter of human dignity. The want of participants to provide for themselves, rather than receive handouts, indicates that, given opportunities and resources, some women would welcome the opportunity to be empowered to provide for themselves and their families.

#### **5.5.2.5 *The socio-economic context: “When women are dislocated from their traditional roles”***

Participants, all of who were women, indicated that they were heads of their households, and that they had to lead and take decisions on behalf of their families.



When asked why they felt it was not their place to head their families, they indicated that “the general belief in the village is that it is males who are regarded as and assumed to be head of families”. This speaks to the socio-cultural fabric of the community, and what happens if the socio-economic context dislocates women from their assumed social position in society. These participants were still trying to find themselves in their allocated position as heads of their households.

The majority of the community in Maqongqo lives off social grants. Therefore, some participants were supplementing what they made from the project with the old-age grant. They reported that the gardening project was a major source of income, as they had no other source. So, for them, the gardening project was not just a pass-time activity; it was a major source of survival in their lives. This may explain the commitment they displayed when relating their stories about their experiences as members of the gardening project.

Upon asking them what socio-cultural issues affected their lives, they provided similar responses to those listed by *Isibindi Samakhosikazi*. For instance, they mentioned that they had lost economically active children to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and that teenage pregnancy was one of the major concerns for the community, as it was eroding the progress that their village was trying to make for itself.

#### **5.5.2.6 Improving the project: “We want to try to help ourselves”**

When asked about the future they wanted for their project, they pointed out that one of the major issues retarding the progress of their project was an irregular water supply, which was impacting negatively on their work.

Part of what set this community development group apart from other communities was their principle of “we want to try to help ourselves; we don’t want handouts ... when people come to assist us, they must find us already trying to help ourselves”. For instance, they indicated that some people had offered to dig a borehole for them, but that they had never honoured their promise. The participants knew that the life of their project depended on regular water supply. So, they indicated that if they were to be

asked what was the one thing they would like to have, “we would unanimously say it is water”; their project heavily depended on a reliable source of water.

### **5.5.2.7 Challenges in doing community development**

Participants indicated that, despite their efforts to keep their project alive, the journey had been a difficult one. However, they indicated that they have succeeded because they are *Iminyezane* – willow trees – unshakeable. It was this kind of resilience that had kept them going – positive thinking even during desperate times. They related the story of the challenge with a tractor as follows:

“When we started the project, we did not have a tractor, and we did not have money to purchase it. So, we had two choices: to do what the tractor would have done or abandon the only idea that could change our lives. We chose to do the former. We decided that we would dig the land with our own hands. It was very difficult, and slow. It required patience and optimism. If we had chosen to, this would have been a very sound reason not to continue with the project. But fortunately, we chose to continue with the project”.

The challenge with the tractor was not the only problem, or the last one. There were other challenges that combined to make their journey difficult. These included, amongst many, unpredictable weather changes, storms and flooding that damaged their vegetables, lack of funding to purchase gardening implements and to cover running costs, lack of fencing to protect their vegetables from being eaten by stray animals, and empty promises from people with aid, amongst others.

The participants cited the problem or habit of promising and not delivering as a “daily event” in the lives of communities. For instance, they indicated that organisations and prominent individuals often promised to assist them with funding for the project, but then usually did not live up to their promises. They said that sometimes the promises would be made in public in order “for the individuals to look good in public, but when the promises had to be kept to the group, we have to make thousands of calls, all in vain”. However, they said that “this has been a lesson to us: we have learned that our project must be self-sustaining; therefore, we take responsibility for solving any

problems that we encounter in our project. We don't give our control to people outside of the project; we keep our power in order to be able to solve our problems”.

## 5.6 Discussion

The case studies of the two community development projects, namely, *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing project* and *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project*, are illustrative examples of the essence of community participation in sustainable livelihoods. In addition, the projects illustrate ways and forms in which community development projects could be deployed as a springboard for empowering women to participate actively in their development and that of their communities. Women empowerment has to do with setting up measures and mechanisms in order to ensure a more equitable sharing and/or redistribution of social power and resources (Narayan, 1995:10).

There are examples of women empowerment that could be drawn on from the two case study projects. For instance, for a community development project to empower women, it must increase their access to, and control over, resources and equip them with skills and confidence in their own skills – that they can initiate and complete actions on their own. The resilience and positive thinking displayed by the participants against all odds is central to the empowerment of women, particularly those that come from socio-economically deprived contexts (Good Governance Learning Network, 2014).

Secondly, the central argument for development is that empowerment has at its core community participation. That is, development that is empowering is based on the thinking that there could be no development for people without the people (Theron & Mchunu, 2016:1 -26). For instance, although there was mention of some form of hierarchy (in the form of a chairperson), participants indicated that decision-making was almost “exclusively participative”. That is, there was sufficient space for participants to exercise their choice and own the decisions for their project, because they were always part of the processes, and the processes were such that they were accommodative and inclusive and every member was able to contribute to the decisions taken by the groups. Although the participants did not allude to it directly, this

contributed to building the capacity of the participants to be able to handle similar situations all by themselves in future. Narayan (1995:10) puts it eloquently:

“The central argument for participatory processes is that involvement in decision-making [should let] people exercise choice and voice more broadly in their lives, as well as in the more immediate context of development programmes that benefit them. Empowerment is ... about the capacity-building of individuals and the organisations that support them”.

What Narayan (1995:10) points out as stated in 3.3, above is the pulse of community development. In the two projects under study, namely, *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project* and *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project*, aspects of control over, as well as the management of resources, formed the core of what these projects were about. For instance, participants from the projects constantly displayed an attitude that indicated they were always prepared to act on their situations rather than being acted upon by these situations: “we hate being handed out food parcels ...”, an indication that they believed in their own strength and were prepared to exercise control over their own situations. For them, development was about interdependence, and not dependence. Their understanding of the purpose of development was that development had to lead to the ability to deal effectively with issues in their own lives.

Implicit in the participants’ view of “handouts” was the potentially hazardous impact of “handouts” in the lives of socio-economically vulnerable people. This potentially harmful dimension was that “handouts” may serve as mental chains, chaining communities to perpetual dependence on these “handouts” that were supposed to emancipate them from the shackles of poverty and underdevelopment. The basis of this argument is the fact that it is almost impossible to sustain a livelihood through “handouts” because are often ameliorative rather than transformative.

It can be argued that discourses from the participants’ evidence that, although the business aspect of the projects may have been weak, the projects were able to empower participants in other aspects (for instance, the resilient attitude, the must-succeed attitude). Although not formally trained, it could be comfortably argued that participants were actively participating and learning from being part of the development processes and procedures. Participants were content in themselves and their worth in the community.

Even though the participants were facing challenges in their respective community development projects, they regarded these challenges as part of what constituted the process of development. That is, they were prepared to brave the storms and to remain unfazed by the challenges with which they were confronted in their efforts to work for sustainable livelihoods for their households and the people of the village in general. In the first place, the decisions that they took to initiate these projects could be an indication of willingness to take control of their lives. Rather than hiding behind the veil of victimhood, they decided that they were going to burn this veil and replace it with a cloak of self-sufficiency. In order to do this, they had to see the positives in their situations, and make do with what was at their disposal.

It was highlighted elsewhere in this chapter that the participants had not had adequate access to formal education. However, these women were able to manage with what they had in the absence of government intervention, particularly at the early stages of the establishment of their projects. However, it needs to be pointed out that participants valued the contribution of government and other development agencies, particularly the funding they had received from the Department of Social Development. This indicates that, even though communities may have a make-do attitude, they still need assistance and support from government and other development agencies as scaffolding mechanisms, particularly where they have reached a deadlock.

What was also clear was how lack of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity, could impact on the development of communities, and the opportunities they had to do things for themselves. For instance, the impact of an unreliable water supply made things difficult for *Iminyezane Gardening Project*, even though they were clear about what they needed to do in order to free themselves from the shackles of poverty and underdevelopment. From the perspective of this study, it is clear that what is possible for communities, particularly those from socio-economically deprived contexts, depends firstly on them, and then on external agencies such as government and other development agencies. It can also be argued that external development agencies may have to trigger development, particularly for communities that are stuck and do not know how to initiate development.

## 5.7 Responses to the questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to women over the age of 18, who were not currently participating in any community development project for sustainable livelihoods. The purpose of this was to explore the reasons behind their non-participation. The administering of the questionnaire was also important in the triangulation of the reasons that had been advanced by those who were participating in the two community development projects, particularly their reference to the youth who were said to be unwilling to participate because “they hate the soil”.

This section, therefore, presents responses of those who were not participating in community development projects at the time of the research. As indicated earlier, it is an exploration of the reasons for why these people did not participate in the community development projects in order to better understand why certain categories of people may not participate.

The questionnaire was administered to 52 individuals who were not participating in any community development project. Out of 52, three (3) had previously participated in community development projects, while 49 had never participated in any community development project.

### 5.7.1 Reasons for non-participation in community projects

The reasons for non-participation in community development projects are presented below:

**Table 5.4: Reasons for Non-Participation**

Reasons for Non-Participation	Number of Responses
Studying	5
Full-time employment	0
Health reasons	4
Pregnancy	3
Disabled	5
Homemaker, family consideration/child care	2

Undergoing training to help find work	8	
No skills for development projects taking place in this community	0	
Not interested in development projects	3	
Scholar/student	0	
Too old	8	
Project is seasonal	5	
Other (specify): Projects opportunity only given to those known	9	
<b>Question 3: Willingness to participate:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
If a suitable opportunity had been offered or circumstances had allowed, would you be able to participate in development projects?	40	12

From Table 5.4 above, forty (40) out of fifty-two (52) respondents (76.9 per cent) indicated that they would consider participating in community development projects if they were offered an opportunity to do so. Thus, a large majority of those that were at the time not participating in any community development project was willing to participate. There were valid reasons for why certain people or categories of people were not participating in community development projects. Twenty-seven out of fifty-two respondents (51.2 per cent) were not participating in any community development project because they were busy with particular activities at the time that made it difficult for them to participate. However, nine (9) out fifty-two (52) respondents (17 per cent) indicated that there was nepotism in choosing people for participation in community development projects. Nepotism is problematic as it usually disadvantages individuals who already do not have access to available forms of capital, be it social, economic or cultural.

### 5.7.2 Community participation and development

The researcher asked respondents questions on issues of community participation and development. The scale of 1-5 was used, where 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree. Below is a representation of the responses to questions on the aspect of community participation and development:

Table 5.5: Community Participation and Development

<b>4. Community participation and development</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
4.1	I know the leaders of this community very well.	4	4	4	-	40	52
4.2	I know my ward councillor.	-	-	8	-	44	52
4.3	I know my inkosi and induna well.	-	3	5	-	44	52
4.4	I know my community members very well.	7	-	32	-	13	52
4.5	I attend community meetings.	22	8	10	12	-	52
4.6	I have required skills to participate in projects that are taking place.	28	12	4	-	8	52
4.7	I am happy about the development in my community.	-	8	12	16	16	52
4.8	I know the development projects that take place in this community very well.	4	17	3	8	20	52
4.9	Community development players in my community play a role in the development projects.	0	12	16	8	16	52
4.10	I know of people/households who participate in community development projects.	-	12	4	18	18	52
4.11	I participate in development projects meetings regularly.	32	10	10	-	-	52
4.12	I see the developmental projects in my community as important.	4	4	12	16	16	52
4.13	Community development projects in my community make a positive change.	4	-	4	36	8	52
4.14	Developmental projects in this community are successful.	8	8	-	20	16	52
4.15	My participation in the developmental projects is very important.	9	15	12	8	8	52
4.16	I understand the term sustainable livelihoods.	11	25	8	8	-	52
4.17	Development project helped improved the well-being of the participants and their families.	-	4	11	14	23	52



From Table 5.5 and the graphical representation above, approximately forty (40) out of fifty-two (52) respondents (76.9 per cent) indicated that they knew their community leaders very well. Therefore, a large majority of those that were at the time not participating in any community development project knew who were their community leaders. A significant percentage of these (i.e. approximately 50 per cent), however, did not attend community meetings and therefore did not know what community development projects were in existence in their community, although they agreed that community development projects make a positive change in their community and the projects were successful. What is also interesting is that, even though the respondents were not participating in community development projects, 71 per cent of them reported that participating families had improved their well-being as a result of participating in community development projects. The contradictions that are embedded in these responses are perplexing. It could be argued that the contradictions may be an indication of a lack of interest in community development projects.

The above contradictions come through in that only sixteen (36) out of 52 respondents (69.8 per cent) felt that their participation in community developmental projects was not important. These individuals felt that community development projects should and could happen without them. It could be argued that they had no interest in participating in community development projects even if the situation allowed – development could go on without them. However, this may also point to a specific understanding of what constitutes a community development project, given the fact that a percentage of these individuals were already participating in other activities that could be classified as development.

## **5.8 Discussion**

From the data elicited through the questionnaire, it could be argued that individuals who were not participating in community development projects were doing so largely because they had no interest in participating. Having said that, some were not participating because they were engaged in other activities. A few were not participating because of the alleged nepotism that went into the selection of people to participate in community development projects.

It is good news if people are not participating because they are participating in other development activities. However, where people are denied an opportunity to participate because of nepotism, it poses a challenge for authorities to ensure that unnecessary hurdles are not placed in the path of people who are willing to participate in order to improve the quality of their lives. There are numerous reasons why nepotism is bad for a community development project, namely it could lead to loss of interest in the projects and mire them with controversy; it may weaken decision-making for the improvement of the development project as friends and family are likely to agree even if they really disagree; it may lock out people who, if they had the opportunity to participate, would have contributed positively to the growth of the project; and/or it may lead to hopelessness to those that are constantly excluded because they happen to fall outside of the network. So, whichever way preferential treatment is viewed, it has undesirable consequences for community development.

It is a good thing for people to participate in other activities, as this is likely to boost the skills pool in the area. These people, once skilled, could benefit community development projects when they are utilised by these projects on a full-time or part-time basis. The opportunities for these people to earn employment may also be increased if they have the necessary skills. In some cases, they may even initiate other development projects, which could assist in increasing employment opportunities for the community.

## **5.9 Interviews with development stakeholders**

Participants in these interviews comprised representatives from the Umkhambathini Local Municipality, the Department of Social Development, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, as well as the Maqongqo ward councillor. The reasons for interviewing the development stakeholders was to explore the roles their organisations played with regards to community development projects. The responses of the four development stakeholders interviewed are presented below.

### **5.9.1 The role of development stakeholders in promoting community development**

When asked about their roles in community development projects, development stakeholders had different views with regards to participation and in community development projects. The Local Economic Development (LED) Manager indicated that development planning at local government level was guided by the people-driven integrated development plan (IDP), which provided a plan for development programmes to be undertaken during a fixed period of time. That is, the IDP process provided a process through which local government could establish a plan for development by which communities would be able to define their goals, needs and priorities for the short, medium and long term (Mkhambathini Local Municipality, 2016: 46).

The ward councillor explained that the framework as set out in the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, which proposed a developmental model of local government, guided the work of councillors. Developmental local government has to do with ensuring that sustainable ways are deployed to meet the socio-economic needs of residents and to improve the quality of their lives, particularly targeting the most socio-economically deprived members of the community. The ward councillor described their role as that of undertaking case work for their constituency or ward and acting as an advocate in leading and resolving the ward's concerns and grievances. That is, the ward councillor explained, their role to lead and champion the interests of their ward and effectively represent these interests at council level. As the ward councillor, their role was to facilitate and ensure that development activities reached communities and that needs, interests and priorities were taken care of and channelled correctly.

The development stakeholder from the Department of Social Development described their role as mobilising cooperatives and communities to participate in community development projects. The participant indicated that, as development stakeholders, they were guided by the Community Development Practitioner Toolkit, a tool that provided practical guidance to community development practitioners in order for them to facilitate community development processes and to enable communities to participate effectively in leading and managing their own development.

The development stakeholder from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development stated that their role was primarily to assist and support food security programmes in communities in order to contribute to poverty alleviation. The development stakeholder explained that beneficiary households were selected through a means test as part of Operation Sukuma Sakhe. Furthermore, they explained, the Department also did its own profiling and provided support to selected households. From the perspective of this participant, ward committees played a vital role in facilitating community participation in development projects as they had inside knowledge of the needs of communities.

### **5.9.2 Community development strategies**

When the researcher asked the development stakeholders if there were any specific rural community development strategies that their organisations had in place for the participation of women in development projects, the response was varied, as outlined below.

The LED Manager pointed out that the Local Economic Development (LED) wing of the IDP guided the municipality. The LED Manager indicated that the strategy review contained women development and gender equality programmes. He explained that these programmes were meant for the development of local women. In addition to this, he further noted that for this specific community a Memorandum of Agreement was signed with a vegetable market in order to ensure the group had a market for their non-gradable vegetables but that unfortunately the market had closed down, leaving the vegetable gardening project without a market. Asked what he had done to replace this, he indicated that he was still negotiating with other local businesses in order to reinstate the market channels for the community, particularly the gardening project.

The development stakeholder from the Department of Social Development indicated that, unfortunately, the Department of Social Development had no specific strategies for community development; what they had were programmes related to the social security regime of services.

The ward councillor indicated that their community development strategies were based on the development priorities that the local municipality, working with communities, had identified in the IDP. The development stakeholder from KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development mentioned that they had food security projects in place targeting communities, irrespective of the gender, but indicated that, because women already fell in the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder, most beneficiaries to these programmes were in fact women.

### **5.9.3 Impact of projects on communities**

The researcher asked the development stakeholders what the impact of their programmes was on the well-being of the communities that were participating in community development projects.

The LED Manager reported that there were positive changes, which indicated that progress was being made to support local economic development. However, he indicated that there was a challenge, particularly with development in rural areas as people still believed “... so much in welfare, and not so much in driving and participating in their own development”. He pointed out, “Historical neglect had eroded initiative in these communities ... the hopelessness in the environment in which they live, has killed interest to do things on their own. They always want to be pushed...”

The development stakeholder from the Department of Social Development indicated that, in their involvement with community development projects, they had noticed that “... some community development projects are unable to work independently ... they still struggle when they have to be left on their own, which means that development practitioners are unable to continue to other projects as they have to spend too much time on one project ... but we can see a huge difference in the socio-economic status of those communities which are participating in community development projects ... they can now support their families”.

The ward councillor also indicated that there were significant improvements in the communities, and pointed out that improvements were even significant “in communities where development projects are driven by the community”.

The Food Security Coordinator from KZNDARD indicated, “our community development interventions do make a difference in communities that take them up, but I believe that there should be on-going training that is given to projects participants to obtain knowledge that will improve their projects”.

#### **5.9.4 Project sponsorships**

Development stakeholders were also asked about community development projects that were being sponsored by their organisations.

The LED Manager indicated, “we do have sponsored community development projects ... we encourage communities to form cooperatives, in order to build local economic capacity”. Besides that, he pointed to the young girls’ leadership programme called “My Friend”, whose objective was to identify and improve the situation of young girls from socio-economically deprived backgrounds by equipping them with requisite leadership skills.

The development stakeholder from the Department of Social Development stated, “We are currently sponsoring two community gardening projects in the area, namely, Tholinhlanhla and Ubumbano Gardening Projects”. He indicated that the project had shown a lot of improvement and that they “are among the best that we are sponsoring”. The ward councillor reported that “as councillors, we sometimes do situational analysis and guide the community members to initiate a certain project”, but could not point to any specific project in which the community was currently participating.

The Food Security Coordinator from KZNDARD indicated, “it is our core business to support communities with different interventions that can bring about change in their lives”. He mentioned that KZNDARD was already sponsoring households with gardening projects, starting from setting up to operating projects. He indicated that they also sponsored community development projects in terms of infrastructure, such as “fencing and water tanks” and that sometimes they even provided project capital such as “start-up livestock such as goats, chicken and egg layering”. He mentioned that the model they used was that “before projects are sponsored, the mindset of the participants

should be set in the position where they can have a sense of ownership ... that this is our project and its success is in our hands”.

### **5.9.5 Community development forums**

The development stakeholders were also asked if there were any community development forums aimed at ensuring community participation in development processes. The LED Manager indicated that they had “ward committees, war rooms for Operation Sukuma Sakhe Initiative, sport forums, disability forums.” as platforms for community participation. The Department of Social Development said, “we are part of war room for Operation Sukuma Sakhe Initiative as well as the forum for non-profit organisations (NPOs)”. With regards to structures at ward level, the ward councillor mentioned ward committees and war rooms as they “have the potential to attract involvement of organisations from different sectors to participate in the development affairs of the community and this includes, in some places, traditional council authorities”. From the point of view of the KZNDARD representative, “Operation Sukuma Sakhe provided an excellent platform for multi-sectoral discussion of community development issues”, and attracted various organisations, including NGOs such as World Vision “which has programmes that support food security”.

### **5.9.6 Participation in community development projects**

The researcher asked the development stakeholders about the extent of participation of communities in the forums set for the discussion of community development issues. The response of the LED Manager was in line with what had emerged from the exploration of the views of those who did not participate in community development projects, namely:

“The area of Umkhambathini Municipality, especially Maqongqo, has a very active community. I believe that those who do not participate in their forums have their own forums that they are busy with, for example, community-based organisations (CBOs) or it could be that other community members are just busy with other economic activities which do not give them enough time to participate”.

However, a different perspective with regards to participation in community development projects was provided by the Department of Social Development: "... those who do not want to participate are normally financially driven, meaning that they want to participate where there is promise of a financial gain". The respondent further indicated that some community members, especially men who believed that men are superior to women, "want to be in control ... and will only participate if they are given leadership positions". His view was that some reasons for non-participation in community development projects had their roots in the patriarchal nature of society, and that "in order to deal with these issues, we would have to mainstream issues of gender equity".

The ward councillor felt that a major challenge lay "in the understanding of the purpose of community development projects ... and the fact that some people wanted quick benefits, [which] is not how development processes work". As an example, the ward councillor indicated that the main challenge was that people still "believe in being employed and they do not want to participate in projects where they have to manage things on their own and create employment opportunities". However, he noted that if people do work in teams such as in cooperatives, "they struggle to make progress as they are driven by personal interest and greed rather collective interest". According to the ward councillor, political issues also surfaced in development projects when people realised that "a community development project was initiated by a councillor associated with a political party that is different from their own ... development is still viewed using a political lens ... who brought the development still matters more than development itself in communities". Therefore, according to the ward councillor, reasons for non-participation were deeply rooted in political party alignments and personal greed, "wanting to be the leader for financial gain, and not for community development".

From the point of view of the KZNDARD, reasons for non-participation had historical roots. For instance, people, especially young people, are reluctant to participate in agricultural activities because there is a misconception that "agricultural work is something that a person does after they have retired or when they are old and do not have anything better".



## 5.10 Summary

This chapter presented findings of the study with the purpose to explore the experiences of women participating in selected community development projects. The findings of the study revealed that women are a key driving force in the efforts to improve the livelihoods of households. Evidence from the study also revealed that, although some women in rural areas have the resilience to make things happen, there are still hurdles that make it difficult for them to participate actively in community development projects.

The data also revealed important issues regarding the participation of communities in community development projects. Various reasons were revealed for the non-participation of some community members in these projects. The findings pointed to a network of factors that made participation in community development projects a complex subject. Reasons for non-participation were, amongst others, the following: some people were already participating in other activities; disinterest in participating; preferential treatment and nepotism excluded individuals who would have otherwise qualified to participate; and/or issues of political party allegiances intertwined with personal interest and greed made participation difficult. Contradictions were noted, particularly in the discourses of those that were not participating in community development projects. These discourses were mutually exclusive in that it did not make sense for them to be coming from the same people. It was therefore concluded that these contradictions were a product of lack of interest in community development projects. With regards to development stakeholders, it emerged that development stakeholders had strong views on community development projects, particularly with regards to the aspect of community participation in community development projects. In large measure, views of development stakeholders aligned with the views of other participants in the study. However, there were few instances where there were differences, particularly with regards to the understanding of the expectations of communities. For instance, the ward councillor believed that people were reluctant to stand up and improve their situations because programmes that did not require initiative from communities had eroded initiative. This was in contrast with what emerged from discussions with the participants from the two projects on which the research was

undertaken. These participants were clear about the fact that they believed in standing up for themselves rather than waiting for handouts from external providers.

The next chapter presents the conclusions, findings and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Introduction

This study explored the experiences of women from rural areas participating in two community development projects, namely, *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project* and *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project*, in Maqongqo, Umkhambathini Local Municipality, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The purpose of this chapter is to consolidate and highlight the key findings of the study. This will be followed by specific recommendations, based on the findings, for how community development could be enhanced in order to ensure sustainable livelihoods, even in socio-economically deprived contexts. The last section of this chapter will present major issues relating to community development and participation that emerged from the study as a way of exposing these issues for the benefit of those who are involved in community development and who may need to consider these going forward. The argument put forth in this study is that conventional ways of understanding community development need to be investigated in order for development to begin to serve communities rather than itself.

### 6.2 Consolidation and summary of the main findings

#### 6.2.1 Objectives of the research study

In order to address the research problem, the following objectives for the study were crafted as indicated under 1.4, above:

- To explore the experiences of women from rural areas participating in two community development projects for sustainable livelihoods: the intention of this objective was to delve into the experiences of these women as reported, in order to understand what their participation in community development projects meant for the building of sustainable livelihoods.

- To understand the reasons for non-participation in community development projects: the researcher had observed that there were individuals and/or sections of the communities who were not participating in community development projects. Therefore, the purpose of this objective was to explore and analyse the reasons behind non-participation in community development projects.
- To investigate the role of development stakeholders in supporting community development projects: the rationale for this objective was based on the assumption and/or understanding that development stakeholders have a crucial role to play in enhancing community development processes, particularly in socio-economically deprived contexts. However, the understanding was that, whatever role development stakeholders take, it must not take away control of the development process from communities and that it must instead enhance the process.

### 6.2.2 Research hypotheses and propositions

The research hypotheses and propositions that the study sought to test were as follows as indicated under 1.3.3, above:

- **The experiences of women participating in community development projects lead to the empowerment and advancement of women in sustainable ways**

The findings of this study revealed that the participation of women in community development projects, to a certain extent, in combination with other personal attributes of the women involved, led to the empowerment and advancement of women. Participants from both community development projects (namely, *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project* and *Iminyezane Vegetable Gardening Project*) that were investigated for purposes of this study reported that their lives and those of their families had improved significantly since they began participating in the community development projects. The majority of these women were heads of their households, and reported that the income they generated from the projects, however meagre, had assisted them to provide for their families. The income was also useful in supplementing the meagre social grants that they were receiving from the Department of Social Development. Therefore, the income they generated from development projects put them in a somewhat better position to be able to provide for their families.

However, for these women the benefits that they had derived from participating in the community development projects were not only meant for their benefit and that of their households; they, particularly members of *Isibindi Samakhosikazi Garment Sewing Project*, also reported that they were now able to assist other families who were in the same situation as they were before they began participating in the garment sewing project. For instance, they were able to donate school uniforms to selected schoolchildren in order to ensure their dignity was protected. For some of these women, the decision to give was derived from their experiences of poverty as school children; they understood what it meant to go to school without a school uniform. This means that participation in the project provided them with a way to intervene (i.e. a therapeutic device) in the social circumstances of what was beyond their control as children. Participation in the projects had not only benefitted the participants from an economic perspective; the participants were now able to empower other community members. In addition, the women who were participating in the two projects displayed significant levels of resilience and invincibility to social ills. The high levels of resilience went a long way towards balancing out the vulnerabilities that these women were experiencing (e.g. the impact of HIV/AIDS and that of the political killings that saw them losing members of their families, including their children and husbands). The naming of their projects as *Isibindi Samakhosikazi* and *Iminyezane* had a very deep meaning for them, and was used to draw strength and resilience that these women would not have been able to access were they not part of the projects. Therefore, the naming of their projects was their way of waging their struggle against the vulnerabilities that they were experiencing as women. It was a device that carried a message that “we shall overcome someday”. The discourses of resilience, unshakeability, dependability and resistance to victimhood were quite prominent in the participants’ responses. The resolve that “we hate handouts ... we can solve our own problems” was quite significant in serving as a litmus paper for the empowerment and advancement of these women.

- **The reasons for non-participation in community development projects are individual and structural**

Findings revealed that people who did not participate in community development projects did this for a variety of reasons. A significant percentage (76.9 per cent) of those who were at the time not participating in any community development project indicated that they were willing to participate. Therefore, there were valid reasons for why certain people or categories of people were not participating in these projects.

Chief among these was the fact that people or categories of people (51.2 per cent) were not participating because they were at the time engaged in other activities (e.g. studying, full-time employment, pregnancy, disability, training in order to gain skills required in order to find a particular job, age), which made it difficult for them to participate in other activities. Five per cent of the respondents were not participating because they were not interested in participating in community development projects. However, nine respondents (17 per cent) reported that they were willing to participate but that they had been excluded because of the nepotism in how people were selected for participation in community development projects.

Development stakeholders, the ward councillor in particular, felt that the major reason for non-participation in community development projects lay in the fact that some people wanted quick benefits and community development projects were largely unable to do this as there was usually no low-hanging fruit and often lengthy processes were to be followed before getting rewards. Secondly, the ward councillor continued, communities still believed in working for someone else – being employed – rather than creating job opportunities themselves. This could link well with the culture of receiving rather than creating that the women's groups reported to be prevalent, particularly amongst young people. Thirdly, people who could not get what they wanted from projects often stopped participating, particularly where there was a discord between personal interest and collective interest. Mostly, what was wanted was something that the development projects could not legitimately offer. Lastly, party political issues often surfaced where people realised that a person associated with their rival political party initiated a particular community development project. These instances could serve as an indication that in some cases development was still viewed through a rival party political lens – that is, the question of who brought the development still mattered more than development itself.

Therefore, as can be discerned from the above, reasons for non-participation were rooted deeply in aspects of individuality, personal interest and community interests, political party alignments, and management aspects of community development projects.

- **The role of development stakeholders is weak and varied, and depends upon the sector.**

Findings of the study revealed that the role of development stakeholders was relatively strong, although people participating in community development projects felt it was lacking and inadequate. It emerged from the study that the roles of development stakeholders had been streamlined according to the sector mandates. For example, projects in which the Department of Social Development was involved were aligned with its mandate of providing “caring and integrated social development services” (Department of Social Development, 2016). Therefore, what possibly have led to community development projects feeling inadequately supported could have been the scale of need in various communities, given the historical backlog. However, in other cases it could be the slow response by the relevant local development stakeholders in responding to the needs of communities.

South Africa does not have a history of community participation in community development prior to the advent of democracy in 1994. During apartheid, denial of political rights extended to community development, as the methods of government were highly centralised, which largely resulted in the black population being denied access to basic services (Williams, 2006:197-217). It was only when the ANC released its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) that people-centred development was foregrounded in order to respond to the needs of the people in a way that ensured improved quality of life. The notion of the IDP was an extension of this trajectory for development. Therefore, the participation of communities in development programmes and activities is as old as or younger than the IDP, depending on how or whether local governments in various contexts have been implementing the IDP processes in any effective way to encourage communities to participate in their own development.

The South African Constitution locates the IDP as a tool to encourage community participation at a local government level (Republic of South Africa, 1996). However, at a practical level, how the notion of community participation will be translated into concrete experiences of people is not a simple matter. Serious work and mindset change is required before this aspiration could be realised. For instance, it is unclear from the Constitution how to measure success or failure of community participation in development planning (Williams, 2006:200); identification and interpretation of the measurements is left in the hands of local development stakeholders. In addition, the

development framework presupposes the existence of appropriate structures and capacity at local government level that could be used to support this policy provision (ibid). However, in reality there is a strong possibility that such structures and capacities may not exist in many contexts, particularly in socio-economically deprived situations. From an IDP perspective, the big question then lies in the matter of why community needs, such as support for community development projects, had not been incorporated in the IDP in the first place, or why communities suddenly felt they had to request things that were not part of the IDP. Did communities know about the IDP process? Did they participate actively in it? Did they know its contents for that particular development period? What processes were followed to make this happen, and how effective were these processes?

The example from one of the projects whereby the Department of Social Development had to “save” the community development project may therefore be an example of a case of social distance between communities and local development stakeholders. It is instructive that none of the local development stakeholders was mentioned in the narrative about assistance from the Department of Social Development, not even as facilitator. This may point to weaknesses and gaps at the level of local development support and coordinated planning.

## **6.3 Recommendations for enhanced community development**

### **6.3.1 Recommendations for policy makers**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for policy makers to consider regarding community development:

- Section 152(e) of the Constitution states that the “... objective of local government is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government” (Republic of South Africa, 1996). This presupposes the existence of robust community forums and capacity at that level to participate effectively in processes of development planning. However, findings of this study pointed to a possibility that, although the IDP process is in place, the capacity to express development concerns and priorities



may not exist at community level resulting in rubber-stamping of IDP's by communities. There is a need for policy to clearly spell out the measurements of the success and failure of community participation. This therefore implies the need for collaboration and co-production with the affected people, together with on-going exploration of better ways to ensure effective participation of differentiated groups within and between communities.

- The effectiveness of provincial and local government in supporting community development should be improved. The delivery of basic services sometimes presents a barrier to community development. In this study, the unreliable supply of water threatened the sustainability of the gardening project. Therefore, minimum standards for infrastructure and service delivery must be crafted in order to ensure that initiative is not stifled by poor delivery of basic services to women in the rural areas. This is to ensure sustainable livelihoods, given the basic needs.

### **6.3.2 Recommendations for communities**

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations are made for communities to consider regarding development:

- Participation is key for the interests and priorities of communities to be heard in a democratic country such as South Africa. Findings of this study revealed that some individuals and/or sections of communities did not believe or think it was important for them to know and understand community development projects that were taking place in their area. There is a need for communities to take interest in community development projects, particularly those that are happening in their regions.
- Findings of this study revealed that one of the reasons for non-participation in community development projects was overreliance on “handouts”, which often eroded initiative and locked families and communities in perpetual cycles of dependence. There is, therefore, a need for communities to revive the spirit of initiative to be resilient and to understand that social grants can only serve an ameliorative function.

### **6.3.3 Recommendations for development stakeholders**

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations are made for consideration by development stakeholders:

- Findings of the study alluded to the fact that community development projects often tend to collapse when development stakeholders withdraw. There is therefore a need for development stakeholders to infuse capacity building for sustainability in order to ensure that communities are able to run projects on their own after they have left. This is particularly important given the scale of poverty and underdevelopment, and the need for development stakeholders to overstretch their services in order to redress the development backlog.

## **6.4 Limitations of the research study**

It is important to critically evaluate a study in order to be able to justify conclusions and gain perspectives regarding the implications of the findings that emerge. The major limitation of this study is that data was collected from a few participants from a restricted geographical area. As a result, the findings of this study may not be representative of what occurs in other contexts, especially the most socio-economically deprived contexts, which are far away from towns and cities. However, generalising findings to other contexts was not the object of this study. The main objective was to reveal certain patterns regarding the experiences of rural women participating in selected community development.

In addition, a further limitation to this study was the tight timeframe within which the study was to be completed as part of a qualification. As a result, there was not enough time to follow up on all the issues that could have been explored in greater depth in the study. Hence, there is a need to provide possibilities for further research.

## **6.5 Possibilities for further research**

The following possibilities for further research are recommended based on the findings and limitations of this study:

- As suggested earlier, the findings of this study may not adequately represent what is occurring in other contexts. Therefore, there is a need to expand the

current research theme to other contexts in order to come to a more objective understanding of the theme.

- This study found that community participation is an integral part of the development process. Already there are mechanisms in place for community participation in South Africa. However, the existing mechanisms assume the capacity of communities to communicate and express their needs and priorities, and to ensure that these eventually become part of IDP's. There is therefore a need to explore various ways in which these mechanisms could be strengthened and differentiated so that they are applicable to a variety of contexts.

## 6.6 Conclusion

In this study, community development for women was for collective, rather than individual, benefit. For example, the finding by this study that women felt that their community development projects contributed to the improvement of conditions in their households and community in general is quite telling. It suggests an understanding of community development as something that assists an individual to be of benefit to their community. For example, although the two projects that were investigated did not generate generous income for their members, women participating in these projects still went out of their way to use their benefits in the projects to benefit those that had less than them. That is, the intention was to ensure that others did not have to go through what they did before their participation in community development projects. This is what kept them going despite challenges such as perceived lack of support from development stakeholders.

Participation of women and communities in general, particularly from socio-economically deprived contexts, is key to the success of efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate poverty and underdevelopment. In this study, it became clear that conventional conceptions of community development, which are mostly oblivious of the dynamics and intricacies involved in this practice of development, fall short of ensuring effective participation of women in community development projects. Conventional conceptions of community participation do not lead to empowerment of those participating in community development projects as they rarely investigate

contextual dynamics that need to be interrogated in order to ensure real community participation.

The role of community development stakeholders is at the centre of efforts to ensure community participation in community development projects – community participation in community development projects will not happen all by itself; it needs to be a deliberate process, led by development stakeholders who are prepared to marry their ways with local and indigenous ways of problem-solving. That is, in order for community development stakeholders to be effective in what they are doing, there is a need for them to understand the local fabric of communities, and be prepared and able to take into consideration indigenous knowledge strands, which communities are already tapping on in order to solve development problems. There is, therefore, an emphasis on the need for community development stakeholders to ensure that community participation in development projects is not reduced to an exercise of importing tried and tested solutions into communities by development workers who disregard local solutions that communities have always used.

The recommendation made by the study is for government policy makers and planners to embrace the reality that the project of community development is incomplete at the level of legislative framing, and that legislative framing is only a beginning. These policy makers and planners need to keep in mind that the essence of the project of community development is actually access, participation and growth. In order for this crossover to happen, the research community needs to point the way by identifying and elevating lessons that are already in existence in many communities where significant progress has been made to ensure that community development is not about itself, but rather about people.

The study explored the experiences of rural women in community development projects; reasons for non-participation in community development projects, and the role of development stakeholders in support of community development, particularly in terms of aspects intended to improve lives of women. Literature on community development, community participation and sustainable development was explored and understandings regarding participation in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods were discussed, pulling out the strands of debates in order to

apply these to the exploration of the experiences of women participating in community development projects.

This chapter provided a summary of the main findings of the study, specific recommendations based on the findings of how community development, particularly in rural areas, could be enhanced in order to ensure sustainable livelihoods. The last section of this chapter presented concluding comments and pulled together issues worth noting in the study. As part of this, the researcher closed off by mapping out some possibilities for further research.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Permission Request: Umkhambathini Local Municipality**

Umkhambathini Local Municipality

Dear Sir,

#### **Re: Request for permission to carry out community research in your area**

I am Eugenie Mazibuko, registered for a Masters in Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch under the supervision of Mr F. Theron.

I hereby request for permission to conduct research on women's participation in community development projects in your area. My research topic is as follows: "The participation of women in rural development projects for sustainable livelihoods: A case study of the Maqongqo area in KwaZulu-Natal".

The research findings are solely for academic purposes but can be made available to you at your request. Information collected from community members would be kept as confidential as possible and participants' identities will remain anonymous. I will also administer questionnaires to community members.

The researcher will be delighted if this request is approved and accepted.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely,

Eugenie F. Mazibuko

## **Appendix 2: Request for Consent from Participants**

Dear Respondent,

### **Re: Request for permission to carry out community research in your area**

I am Eugenie Mazibuko, registered for a Masters in Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch under the supervision of Mr F. Theron.

I hereby request you to participate in research on women's participation in community development projects in your area. My research topic is as follows: "The participation of women in rural development projects for sustainable livelihoods: A case study of the Maqongqo area in KwaZulu-Natal".

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this study. The research findings are solely for academic purposes. Information collected from you would be kept as confidential as possible and identity will remain anonymous.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, you may contact my supervisor or me.

The researcher will be delighted if this request is approved and accepted.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely

Eugenie F. Mazibuko

## **Appendix 3: Focus Group Interview Questions**

### **The Historical Perspective**

1. Before you started your projects, what other projects were you engaged in, or what is it that you were doing for sustaining your families?
2. What challenges did you face before you started your project that you are not facing now since the adoption of your project?

### **The Project**

3. When did the project start? What is the project about – describe how it works, i.e. the specific project activities?
4. Do you remember who initiated the project and how did it start?
5. Tell me about the leadership in your group, if there is any, i.e. does anyone have any specific roles that they play, how you choose the leaders of your group, does your leadership have some kind of qualifications or knowledge that others do not?
6. Who is participating in the project? i.e., what kind of people do you recruit to join your group, if there are any criteria? (e.g. widows only, women only and why, women who are the heads of their families, the elderly, the disabled, and so forth).
7. What are some of the achievements that you have had since you started this project?
8. What challenges have you experienced since you started this project and how do you deal with them?

### **Partnerships**

9. Do you have any kind of partnership with any groups or organisation in your project? (e.g. local government, NGOs, traditional leaders, business people or international donors).
10. If you said yes to the above question, please describe them and their roles in your project. What kind of assistance have you received from them (e.g. funding, skills, land)? Did the assistance impact on your project in any way?
11. If you said no to the above question, have you heard of or do you know about any of these organisations?

### **Sustainable Development and Sustainable Livelihoods**

12. What do you know about the phrase “sustainable development”?
13. Do you think your project is contributing in any way towards your livelihood?

14. How would you rate livelihoods in your households before you participated in this project, and since you have started this project (i.e. what are the benefits of the projects for you as women? Have your lives changed)?

**The Socio-Economic Context**

15. Can you describe the division of labour in your households, i.e. who does what at household and economic level (e.g. labour, finances, decision-making etc.)?
16. Besides this kind of project, what other livelihood options are there for you (i.e. what do people do for their day to day lives)?
17. What are the socio-cultural issues that might affect your project activities (e.g. burden of caring for those with chronic illnesses like HIV, children dropping out of school for lack of fees, low education levels, early marriages and teen pregnancies)?

**Recommendations for the improvement of the project**

18. What do you think could be done to improve the project?
19. Is there anything else that you would like to bring to my attention?

\*\*\*\*\* **Thank you for your participation** \*\*\*\*\*



## **Appendix 4: Interview Schedule for Developmental Stakeholders**

1. What is the role of your organisation, department in promoting community development and participation?
2. Are there any rural community development strategies that your local municipality/tribal authority or organisation (NGO, Government Department) have in place for women in project development?
3. Are there any significant changes that you have noticed in the well-being of the communities that participate in these projects?
4. Has your organisation engaged in helping development projects in this community? If yes, are the projects still running or not?
5. Who are the main beneficiaries of the development projects, and why?
6. Are there any community participation integrated forums aimed at enhancing community development?
7. If you answered no to the above question, then how do you engage the community in decision-making processes pertaining to their development?
8. Are there any other factors outside your organisation that you think contribute to non-participation of the community in development planning forums and subsequently in projects?
9. Do you have a monitoring and evaluation plan for the projects that you sponsor?
10. What future plans does your organisation have to promote community participation in sustainable development projects?

**\*\*\*\*\*Thank you for your participation\*\*\*\*\***

## Appendix 5: Questionnaire for Non-Participants in Community Development Projects

This questionnaire was for women over the age of 18 who are not currently participating in community development projects for sustainable livelihoods. The purpose was to assess why they did not participate and gain insight into their knowledge of community participation, development and sustainable livelihoods.

Question 1		Yes	No
	Are you currently participating in community development projects? <i>(if yes, end of questions for this person)</i>		

Question 2: Participation		Yes	No
a	Have you ever participated in community development project?		
b	What is the main reason why you stopped or why are you not participating ? (write number from options below)		

### Options for Q2b

1	Studying
2	Full-time employed
3	Health reasons
4	Pregnancy
5	Disabled
6	Homemaker, family consideration/child care
7	Undergoing training to help find work
8	No skills for development projects taking place in this community
9	Not interested in development projects
10	Scholar/student
11	Too old
12	Project is seasonal
13	Other: specify

Question 3: Willingness to participate:		Yes	No
	If a suitable opportunity had been offered or circumstances had allowed, would you be able to participate in development projects?		

**Rate below as follows: 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree**

<b>Question 4: Community participation and development</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1	I know the leaders of this community very well					
4.2	I know my ward councillor					
4.3	I know my inkosi and induna well					
4.4	I know my community members very well					
4.5	I attend community meetings					
4.6	I have required skills to participate in projects that are taking place					
4.7	I am happy about the development in my community					
4.8	I know the development projects that takes place in this community very well					
4.9	Community development players in my community plays a role in the development projects					
4.10	I know of people/households who participates in community development projects					
4.11	I participate in development projects meetings regularly					
4.12	I see the development projects in my community as important					
4.13	Community development projects in my community make a positive change					
4.14	Developmental projects in this community are successful					
4.15	My participation in the developmental projects is very important					
4.16	I understand the term sustainable livelihoods					
4.17	A development project helped improve the well-being of the participants and their families					

\*\*\*\*\* **Thank you for your participation** \*\*\*\*\*